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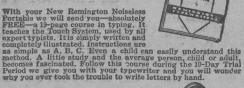
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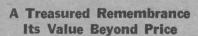
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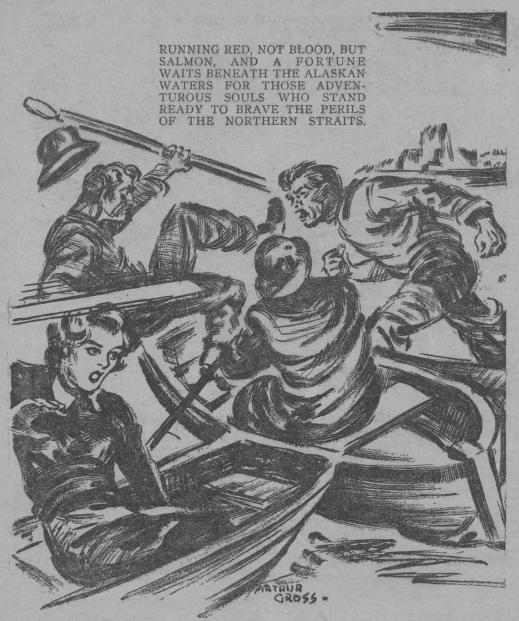
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RED WATER



CHAPTER I
A SPORTING CHANCE

AS JUDGE KEENE read the will in his best judicial voice, he paused frequently and peered over the top of his glasses at Cavanaugh, as if to say, "This section is important, and I hope it is sinking in." Then he would continue. At

length he tossed the document onto his desk.

"There, Hayden," he said, "it is in a nutshell. Now before you take a punch at me, which is what you'd like to do, and which would be bad for both of us, read your father's letter. And another thing, remember this, although your father spent most of his life at sea, he acquired a remarkable

A COMPLETE BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL

by FRANK RICHARDSON PIERCE



knowledge concerning law and business. Lest you or some alleged heir decided to attempt to break the will on the grounds of mental incompetence, there are three affidavits attached proving beyond the shadow of a doubt he was in his right mind and knew exactly what he was doing."

The state of the last

It struck Hayden Cavanaugh that Judge Keene was too confounded keen to suit him. Back in his mind lingered the thought that his father had been largely influenced by the judge. Much had been left to the lawyer during the past year, while Hayden had been finishing up a frequently interrupted college education. Skippering a subchaser during the war had set him back a year; then putting in an additional year at sea in order to win his master's papers had taken toll. Cavanaugh had been born at sea, aboard one of his father's sailing ships before the elder Cavanaugh went over to steam.

The letter was rather lengthy and concluded:

"I can not help but feel Marie Heath is not the sort of a girl for a man whose calling is the sea. He needs a companion who'll stick not only through thick, but thin as well. "However, I've always given every man a sporting chance, and I'll do no less by my own son and the girl he has chosen for his wife. Therefore, I am giving you the Sunset. She is in good condition, victualed, fueled and ready for sea. Go ahead and make good, and the best of luck go with you. I hope your little girl will stick while you're doing so. You've never been whipped yet.

"The bulk of my fortune is held in trust by Judge Keene, who will administer it as I have directed. Don't blame the judge for this. You never have liked him any too well. However, I've never misjudged a man yet, and in my opinion the judge is sound and right from keel to masthead."

The letter closed with expressions of love, confidence and good wishes. Hayden Cavanaugh's reactions were those his father had predicted. He decided not to take a punch at the judge after all, but he did not exactly warm up to him. "As I understand it, sir, the Sunset is mine and that's all. I've got to stand on my own hind legs in managing her?"

"Exactly!"

"Well, it's a sporting chance, and I'll take it. How about the Mt. Baker Park home?"

"That remains a part of the estate. You may occupy it for the present. When a change is necessary I'll advise you. Goodby, Hayden, and good luck!"

The judge extended his hand and Hayden accepted it. He was a gentleman at all times, though, confound the judge! he might at least inform him the charities and endowments the bulk of his father's fortune would be applied to. It was decent of him, though, to permit him to remain in his home. It overlooked Lake Washington, and from the veranda one could frequently see the university oarsmen practicing. The seagoing cruiser, *Spray*, was tied up in the boat house, ready at all times. That was part of the estate, also. And his car? Then he remembered the runabout was in his own name.

It was considerable of a let-down to enter a lawyer's office expecting to find the responsibility of an estate on one's shoulders, and to emerge to find one cut off except for a steamer, and at a time when hundreds of craft were tied up for lack of cargo. "And all on account of a girl," he mused. "Well, she's worth it, but I'll have to break the news easy. Father was wrong on caring

only for comfort and luxury. She's the kind that sticks."

HE Sunset was tied up at buoy in Lake Union. Vessels lingering in Seattle any length of time found it convenient to run through the canal to the fresh water basin, and kill the salt water growth on their hulls. The sight was not altogether encouraging. Some fifty hulls, in various stages of completion, were tied up, forming a bridge of ships. They had been designed to carry supplies to France during the war, but were moored in the basin when the Armistice stopped building. They were not ready for the sea, and represented a war loss rather than a trade barometer. But seven steel ships lying abeam, their stacks covered over, indicated that deep sea tonnage was not much in demand.

Cavanaugh circled the steel craft in the cruiser, then bumped up against the Sunset's gangway. She was a counterpart of several of the wooden vessels, except that she was complete in every detail and had made a voyage or two during the war. He had forgotten how his father had acquired her—perhaps the old gentleman had lost a bet. He did not know she was one of his problems and that he had once remarked, "It'll take a younger man than I to solve the Sunset's fate!" His last earthly act had been to will and bequeath the problem to his son.

Cavanaugh assisted the girl up the gangway. Then looked down from the bridge. "Well, Marie, what do you think of it?"

"Not very graceful, a bit tubby, and smells of rope and things," she replied. "What did you bring me out here for?"

"This," he said, "is our meal ticket."

"What do you mean, Hayden?" she queried, sensing the unusual note in his tone.

"Just that. The will was read this morning, and I was bequeathed this and good luck!"

"Don't jest about such things!" she said sharply.

"I'm not!"

She was silent for several moments. "You'll contest it, of course?"

"No, the estate was dad's and his the right to do with it as he saw fit. He saw fit to give us a sporting chance, and willed us the Sunset. May she bring home the bacon."

"Hayden! Haven't you any spirit in

vou?"

"Yes, that's why I'm not going to attempt to break the will. That's why I want to see how much backbone I have. It'll be sport working out this problem together." He eyed the gleaming diamond on her finger that betokened their engagement. "Won't it?" he insisted after an interval.

"Perhaps, but it's not necessary. He could have just as well left you independ-

ent."

"I'd call a good steamer mighty near independence—a lot nearer than many get,"

he replied practically.

She wasn't quite so sure, and on the way back her mood was silent and thoughtful. Somehow a bit of the glamor with which she clothed Hayden Cavanaugh was missing. She was essentially a girl who admired varnish rather than the structure beneath. Some of the gilt had been removed from Hayden in the form of stocks and bonds the elder Cavanaugh had otherwise dis-

"I'm utterly sick," she said as he left her,

"and I'd made so many plans, too."

"We'll make a lot of new plans together,"

he replied cheerfuly.

When Cavanaugh got down to business and commenced to rustle cargo, which was the following day, he found it difficult to maintain his cheerful attitude.

"Many shipping concerns are operating at a loss," one operator informed him quite frankly, "but you should worry—you've money enough back of you to tide you over. It's the little fellows like me that have to scratch gravel."

"And I'm one of 'em, as you'll find out when the news breaks," returned Hayden

as he left.

In the ten days that followed, the best he could do was to book a South American lumber cargo for late autumn-and this

was February.

"I can't have her idle all that time. Sugar's going up, might ramble down there, buy a cargo and dump on the market, thereby making a neat-profit for myself, and doing the public a bit of good. No, can't do that, because I'd have to run down empty; and it would take a lot of cash to swing the deal. Huh!"

Marie had recovered somewhat from the blow, and was almost her normal self once more. That helped some, for he needed encouragement from that particular source; more than he got, but apparently all that

was within her to give. Then, she was occupied with her own affairs, though the

wedding was months ahead.

"Don't go too strong on the wedding," he said one day, "because I'm still at sea with no port in sight." He paused, then disclosed what was really on his mind.

"I'm going to be married in June, Hayden, and it's up to you to be ready."

"I'll be ready!" he answered grimly. "See you tonight."

LD Man Opportunity who goes around knocking at people's doors and is occasionally admitted, knocked lightly on Cavanaugh's door several days later. It was so light a knock, a man with less auditory powers would not have heard Tucked away on the page devoted to waterfront news was an item of interest to a limited number, but of vast interest to them. Cavanaugh read it, skipped on to the next item, then returned and read it again. Then he grabbed his hat and raced from his office.

"A lot of people are going to work fast on that, and I'm one of them," he exclaimed.

CHAPTER II THE WINNING NUMBER

HE three-room apartment of Miss Edna Geary was as neat as a pin, but she continued her dusting in order to quiet her nerves. From time to time she would read a message over, then continue her dusting. She was dusting the piano for the fourth time when the doorbell rang.

"Shall I answer?" inquired her chum.

"Yes, Rita!"

Rita vanished and presently returned. "A Mr. Langley desires to see you. He says it is very important."

"Very well!"

Edna entered the room without offering her hand. "Be seated, Mr. Langley," she said. It was apparent they had met before.

"I'm glad to see you looking so well, Edna," Langley began.

"Miss Geary, if you please. Edna is reserved for my friends. What is it you wish to see me about?" Edna had a very good idea of the nature of his business.

"We have been advised by our Eastern man that, in making the award on the Kalla Bay fish-trap site in Alaska, the Government resorted to a lottery, and you held the winning number. Of course you are not engaged in the cannery business, Miss Geary, and it occurred to us that perhaps you would be willing to sell your right to us. We are prepared to offer you as high as five thousand dollars, cash." He drew forth a check book.

"The trap site is not for sale to the Kalla Packing Company, Mr. Langley, at any

price.'

He ignored her coolness. "Don't let that

little affair—" he began.

"You term it a little affair!" she said scornfully.

His assurance seemed to vanish instantly. "Five thousand dollars is a lot of money for an ordinary school teacher," he snapped, "and we're prepared to give you just that. Let me remind you the Kalla Company is prepared to fight this thing through to the finish. We'll hold up the award on the grounds that it was an unfair method of awarding such a coveted location. It is the last site the Government intends to allot in that district, and instead of limiting the applicants to the bona fide companies engaged in canning salmon, it was thrown open to the rabble. Everybody and his dog filed an application."

"Anything the Government has to give away of value is naturally open to all American citizens. I am one, I exercised my right, and was fortunate in securing a prize. As to reminding me of the Kalla Company's methods, it is not necessary. I taught in Alaska last year and had ample opportunity to see them at close hand. Nothing is too low for you to resort to to accomplish your ends; you ship the scum of the earth up there to work in your canneries; you cheat natives and whites alike at every opportunity, and for one I don't intend to have anything whatever to do with you."

"Very well, if that's your decision, there is nothing more to be said, now. Later, however, Miss Geary, will come regrets and the regrets will not be ours. Enjoy your trap site while you can—it won't remain yours long. We've fished off that location

for three years—"

"Illegally," she cut in.

"We've fished there, and what is more, we intend to continue, this coming summer and for many summers to come." With this parting shot, Mr. Langley vanished.

"Edna, you have about one hundred per cent less brains that I gave you credit for having. Five thousand dollars in the hand is worth a hundred thousand in other people's pockets. If it had been I, that man wouldn't have left the room without writing a check, unless it had been over my dead body." Rita was dumbfounded.

"I have some sense of decency, and the Kalla Packing people are impossible. There goes the doorbell again. I seem to be popular with my site. If it is Langley, don't answer."

Rita scouted to the transom and reported, "Looks like it might be the stroke oar of the Washington crew. Something over six feet, weight around one hundred and eighty on the hoof and—let's admit him."

"Go ahead, Rita!"

ND so Mr. Hayden Cavanaugh was admitted. He faced the two ladies smilingly. "Hope I'm not too late, but if the cannery and fish trap site is not already disposed of, I'm here to offer a most astounding proposition."

"Proceed."

"Briefly. I have a wooden vessel, ready for the sea and no cargo, nor any signs of a cargo. You have a fish trap site and no cannery. Let's get together and form a stock company, pick up the equipment of some abandoned cannery, and go into business. I'm frank to admit the idea came to me while reading the account in this morning's paper of your good fortune, and I didn't take much time for constructive thought, because I knew the big companies would be camping at your door with offers. If you are not interested in my scheme, however, let me say that a good conservative estimate of the site is fifteen thousand dollars. Don't dispose of it for a cent less." "How much will you give me for it?"

"I can't give you a cent, but I'll give you twenty thousand dollars' worth of stock in the company. All I have is lots of ambition and a steamer. Frankly, I expect you to turn me down, although if given time I think I can convince you the proposition is sound."

Edna was thoughtful for several minutes, frequently regarding her caller sharply. "You wish time to investigate?" she queried.

"That's it!"

"Then let's investigate together. I'll not accept any offer for a week. You have that long to convince me."

"Thanks; when shall we start in?"

"This afternoon," Edna replied. "Call for me at two."

Cavanaugh felt like dancing as he left

"Lord," he exclaimed, "and some people claim you can't do business with a woman."

Rita was excited. "Know who that is, Edna? Well, it's the Hayden Cavanaugh. He's one of the catches, and is engaged to that doll-faced Marie Heath whose picture is always in the paper on Sunday morning."

"That's interesting!" replied Edna noncommittally. She was trying to see the catch in it all; the wealthy Mr. Cavanaugh needing money, and unable to pay more for her trap site than twenty thousand dollars

in stock.

Then came three other men with check books, and finally a reporter of an evening paper accompanied by a photographer. "Nothing just yet," she informed them. "Later on there may be a story, but a schoolmarm winning a fish trap site isn't really important, is it?"

"What are you going to do with it?"

"That will come later."

AN'T play tennis with you this afternoon, Marie, I'm up to my neck in business!" announced Cavanaugh.

"My, but you sound businesslike. Can't you postpone it?" she inquired. He noticed a trace of disappointment in her voice and

something more.

"Not very well. You see I've made my appointments already, and it's the first chance I've really had to make anything out of the *Sunset*. Sorry!" He hung up the telephone, and hurried away to meet his possible business associate.

She was ready, and the romantic Rita lost an opportunity of talking with him

while Edna dressed.

"I'm primed with figures, Miss Geary. Red salmon run for about three weeks in July. Last year they brought nine dollars a case, that's forty-eight tall cans. Our old ship can handle about thirty thousand cases. Say we got fifteen thousand cases of Reds, and fifteen thousand of Humpbacks. The Humpies don't bring as much as the Reds, but it's better than coming back empty. We can pack the Humpies off Kodiak after the Red run is over. That's one advantage of a floating cannery. Cans cost a dollar and a half a case, and will have to be paid for in advance; also we'll need twenty tons of salt and—no time to name all the items here, but they all cost money. However, a pack of thirty thousand should bring in over two hundred thousand dollars, and that'll cover a lot of costs, and leave a profit besides. I measured up the after hold of the Sunset, and there's plenty of room for a cannery, if we handle the space right. It'll take a crew of twenty Chinamen and about thirty whites. Add sixteen gill net boats, and two fishermen to the boat, and you'll have our gang. Some of the fishermen have their own boats."

Somewhere she had read a personality article about old Captain Cavanaugh. It had touched on his thoroughness and ability to quote statistics on various businesses in which he was engaged. Hayden's figures

were impressive.

"Where are we going?" she asked, as they roared over Victory Way at a speed well beyond the limit. "Aren't you afraid you'll be arrested."

"Can afford to take a chance rather than lose an opportunity," he replied. "Wonder-

ful little bus-I like it."

He turned off the highway near one of the smaller Puget Sound communities, followed a road bordered by towering firs, and presently the blue waters of the Sound greeted them. In a small cove were a number of weather-beaten buildings. He pulled up before them. "This cannery hasn't been running for two years, due to shortage of fish," he explained, "and perhaps the owner will listen to reason. But first we'll inspect the place."

No one was about, not even a watchman, and after some prying on a window he gained admittance, then assisted her through. "I didn't have time to get hold of the owner, and borrow a key," he explained. "We are technical burglars, but if the owner knew our purpose he'd doubt-

less fall upon our necks."

Edna knew something of canneries, and Cavanaugh had spent three vacations at one of his father's establishments in Alaska before it was absorbed by one of the larger companies. The inspection they made was thorough, and the appraisal was a fair one.

"I'll offer him fifteen thousand cash, or more if he'll take stock," he said, then smiled. "I'm getting the cart before the horse. Perhaps you don't think much of the idea, and I'll find myself with a float-

ing cannery and no place to fish?"

"Possibly I may be crowding my luck," she answered, "but if I am I'm ready to chance it. I'm going in with you. I've been cold-blooded throughout the day, have fought back my enthusiasm, and my cold-blooded judgment, such as it is, tells me to

go ahead with reasonable safeguards."

"Good!" he exclaimed. "Now we'll run to Everett and hook up with the owner. I want everything nailed down before the news leaks out. Perhaps you don't know much about the Kalla Packing Company's methods, but I do."

"And so do I!" she answered so quickly that he wondered what her experience had been. "Look!" she exclaimed a short distance from the cannery. "Someone has been in just after we were. He turned around and has gone back to the highway.

You don't suppose—?"

"I'm ready to suppose anything," he replied, "now that people know you have been awarded the site. If somebody noticed us setting off together this afternoon, he might not know what we were about, but he would be quite likely to investigate if it happened to be one of the cannery crowd. That site has been a plum they've angled for for many years without success. And you can depend upon it when they find they can't buy it from you, there's going to be a lot of opposition."

"And when the Kalla Packing Company learns you're coming up with a floating cannery, they'll be ready to commit murder, Mr. Cavanaugh. One of my chief reasons for accepting your offer, aside from the excitement it involves, is the fact that the Kalla people have control of most of the available building sites near the bay. We'd have to erect our buildings on piles in deep water." They were getting along famously, for each realized the other had a well-de-

fined knowledge of conditions.

AVANAUGH opened up the car and took the gravel road to the highway at a forty-five mile clip. If a car had followed them he did not propose to let its occupants put anything over. He saw, immediately ahead, a car hurrying along as rapidly as they were. It, too, turned off, and headed for Everett. "Now for a race!" he said grimly. "He has a half-mile start."

The runabout fairly bounded as it hit the ribbon of concrete. The other driver had let it out, and Cavanaugh's speedometer was hovering around 60 most of the time, except at the turns, which were wide and gradual. "There's a motorcycle be-

hind us!" the girl exclaimed.

"Is it an Indian?"

"I don't know. It's red."

"That's it! State Highway Patrolman.

We're in for it!" And yet Cavanaugh did not slow up. The motorcycle officer came closer and closer until he was alongside, and above the rush of wind, which drowned his voice, signaled for them to stop.

Cavanaugh pointed frantically ahead. "Get him! Get him!" he yelled. The officer did not know what it was about, but sensed something unusual, for that speed was rare on the highway. He took after the other car. "Hang on, Miss Geary, we're going to turn. He'll arrest the other fellow and wait for us to come up. He may be put out at our getting away, but he'll have one bird in the hand."

They lurched down a wood road for a half-mile, then came to another that parallelel the highway. Cavanaugh crowded the car to the limit of safety and a margin over. Not until they were in the streets of Everett did he slacken speed, then only enough not to attract attention. He pulled up before a "No Parking" sign and hopped out.

"Come on!" he invited.

She followed him, and presently they entered an office.

"Mr. Seldon!" he stated.

"I'm Seldon!"

"How much do you want for the machinery in the cannery, exclusive of boilers and engine; cannery machinery proper, I mean."

"Why, I hadn't thought-"

"Neither had I until I looked it over and on inquiry discovered it hadn't been operating, nor any likelihood of doing so this year."

"Twenty thousand dollars!"

"Too much! I'll give you fifteen thousand cash, or——"

The telephone rang.

"I'll meet you part way, Cavanaugh, I'll sell for eighteen thousand dollars, cash!" Seldon picked up the telephone, and Cavanaugh waited impatiently. "Hello, who! What! Langley! Shake up your phone, Langley, I can't hear."

"I'll pay your price of eighteen thousand dollars, cash!" said Cavanaugh in loud tones. "Here!" He thrust a dollar into Seldon's hand. The man pocketed it mechanically, then a strange expression came over his face. He handed the dollar back, but Cavanaugh refused to touch it. Presently Seldon hung up.

"Langley just phoned that he had been

arrested by a highway policeman while going sixty miles an hour; and that if you came up here to buy the cannery machinery to wait until I heard from him. Under the circumstances the deal is off for the

time being," explained Seldon.

"No, it isn't, Mr. Seldon," replied Cavanaugh with a smile. "There was an offer by you, an acceptance by me and a consideration paid which you accepted and put into your pocket. That consummated the deal. If either party attempts to withdraw now, that party is subject to an action for damages, and in our case the damages would be rather heavy. Your lawyer will bear me out, I'm sure."

"I'll see what he has to say, also just what Langley has to say before taking

further action."

"The money will be ready on demand, either cash or certified gheck," replied Cavanaugh.

"And where," asked Edna as they left the building, "is the money coming from?"

"Search me," grinned Cavanaugh. "Ah, a committee awaits. Hello, here's Langlev. Rather hot under the collar, too. If he didn't know before, he knows now who his opposition will be this summer if he's really prepared to fight. From the way he's been moving I think there's no doubt of his intentions. Hello, Langley."

The Kalla Packing Company man nodded briefly, then Hayden faced a committee of two motorcycle police; one representing the City of Everett and the other the State of Washington. Cavanaugh smiled. "All right boys, I plead guilty to speeding at sixty miles an hour and to parking in a no parking zone; where do we go from here?"

They explained, and Cavanaugh put up the necessary bail, which he promptly for-

feited.

CHAPTER III OLD MAN TROUBLE

LD MAN TROUBLE was on the job for the next week and many weeks thereafter. It was simply surprising how many different varieties he could dish up on short notice, thanks to the Kalla Packing Company and their northern manager.

Seldon did not wait for Cavanaugh to return, but went to him. "I'm throwing myself on your mercy," he groaned. "My lawyer says you've got me, particularly as Miss Geary was a witness, but the Kalla people threaten to run me out if I go through with the deal, and I know what they can do once they start gunning. I've side-stepped trouble, so far."

"That's what makes them so hardboiled," explained Cavanaugh. "They're used to riding rough-shod over people, both here on the Sound and up north. I'm sorry for you, but we are giving you a good price and have to look out for number one."

"I admire your nerve, but don't think much of your judgment. All right, come around with the money when you're ready,

and I'll do my part."

Putting off the evil moment was a breathing spell for Cavanaugh, for, try as he might, financial sources were closed to him. He guessed the reason without difficulty, but did not give up. His own reserve was gone, thanks to expenses in forming the company, but Miss Geary was in the affair now, and he had to win out. As a last resort, he tackled Judge Keene. "I'm not asking it as a favor, sir, I'm coming as one business man to another. twenty-five thousand as a starter, and I'm giving good security. Ship and cargo will be insured in your favor."

"My instructions are specific on that matter-I'm not to loan you any money,

Hayden. Sorry."
"So am I," he replied feelingly.

I'm not licked yet."

"That's the way to talk, young man!" Hayden departed with good old-fashioned advice ringing in his ears.

"Can't do business on advice and nice words," he growled, "and the judge will follow instructions to the letter, depend on

that."

More trouble was being stirred up for Cavanaugh at that very moment. One of Marie Heath's chums was calling on her, and the girls had reached the confidential

"Everything is in a mess," Marie was explaining. "Hayden's father cut him off except for an old tub that he's trying to make money out of. I don't know what to think. I know nothing of Hayden's business ability, but I have some hopes. He has gone into partnership with a school teacher, and they are going to make a fortune with a floating cannery. Isn't that rich—the school teacher part of it? Can't you picture the severe old dame pointing a

finger of disapproval at Hayden, when he doesn't do something she thinks should be done!"

Marie's chum regarded her with pity, "My dear Marie, don't you ever read the papers? The old maid school teacher is anything but that. She is only twenty or twenty-one. She has brown hair of the shade that drives men mad, and her eyes are blue; she's one hundred and ten pounds of energy and nerve. Why the newspapers say she can even paddle one of those skin boats the Eskimos and Aleuts use. That means she's a girl that can paddle her own canoe. She's dangerous, Marie—for Hayden. Get a morning paper and read the story about her, along with a two-column picture, and draw your own conclusions."

Whereupon the chum departed, leaving Marie alternately miserable and indignant.

A glance at the morning paper confirmed her worst fears. "I'll settle all that," she said decisively, "and settle it at once."

AVING hopped from one to another, Old Man Trouble finally joined forces with Langley. "Let's get this bird, Cavanaugh," he suggested gleefully, and Langley agreed. He had to have help, so he sent for a man he knew, Dan Benedict. Benedict belied his name inasmuch as he was single, and believed himself well off. He answered to the nickname, "Single," and rather gloried in it. Woman's sphere in this world was one of pursuit, and man was in the lead with none too much margin. "But I'm too fast for 'em and they've never caught me yet!" he would conclude. Benedict had been employed for ten years by the Kalla people and knew the cannery game from fin to label. Langley got to the point at once.

"You've something like ten thousand dollars tucked away, Single. I know you want to invest in the cannery game because you've tried to buy our stock several

times."

"And it wasn't for sale!"

"Exactly. It's too good to let go of. Young Cavanaugh is starting a floating cannery, and he's going to need money, badly. He'll welcome you with open arms." Langley winked. "Get me? Now I'll loan you fifteen thousand dollars for six months, you to give me your stock as security for your note. That'll give you a big voice in affairs, big enough to make

a lot of trouble when operations commence. How about it?"

"I'm willing!"

The visit of Single Benedict to their headquarters sent Edna into a state closely resembling panic. "Don't accept anything from him," she pleaded. "Have nothing to do with him. He's a Kalla man."

"Let's find out what he wants, anyway?"

suggested Cavanaugh.

Accordingly Benedict was admitted into Cavanaugh's private office, and lost no time in getting to the point. 'I'm an old cannery man, Mr. Cavanaugh, and I've twenty-five thousand dollars to invest in the cannery business. I know the venture you're embarking on, and we should be able to get together on some basis."

Cavanaugh was thoughtful for several moments; then he asked him questions, and finally agreed to give his visitor a decision

in half an hour.

When Single Benedict was beyond earshot Edna emerged from the private office where she had fled at sight of him.

"Well?" she queried.

"Heaven sent him," said Cavanaugh, "even if he is an enemy. What do you

know about him?"

"That he's a Kalla man is sufficient. He is bound to them hand and foot. It must have been Langley who sent him here, and I'm surprised he could do anything so crude. Single Benedict is a woman-hater, too, but that doesn't affect my opinion of him. It's his Kalla association."

"Miss Geary, I know all you say is true, but the fact remains I have got to have twenty-five thousand dollars—and a lot more. I've tried the banks and private in-The banks have turned me dividuals. down cold, and in that I very certainly see the hand of the opposition. Individuals won't advance the money unless we give them a share all out of proportion to what they are entitled. Then there is another angle; wherever the money comes from we have no guarantee that the lender won't be induced to sell out to the Kalla crowd. Our only chance is to accept the money we need, regardless of the source, play the game square, keep our eyes open, and make the best of it. Many a battle has been won by allowing the other fellow to think you were playing his game according to his rules. I'm afraid of the Kalla crowd, but if they think we don't suspect them of being behind Benedict, we can play our

own game—and I'm also afraid of a money shortage. We're up against it. If we take it from Benedict then we know who it is we must watch, which may help some. However, I'll protect your interests by leasing the site from you for one season, instead of buying it outright, and paying in stock. That's only fair to you."

"I'll do nothing of the sort," she replied with spirit, "but I'm afraid of Benedict just the same. We sink or swim together, and we should be able to beat them at any game in the end, so long as the majority of the

stock remains in our hands."

"Exactly, Miss Geary; you're a brick. I think it is best to accept the offer. Benedict expects a foreman's job, of course, but we'll watch him."

And thus Benedict was admitted, to Langley's great glee, when he learned of it

very shortly afterward.

"From now on, Single, you're a Cavanaugh man, but I'll manage to slip instructions to you from time to time," he chuckled, very well satisfied with the progress he was making.

He even made Seldon happy by telling him he could deliver the cannery machinery without fear of his wrath, so it was a great day when the Sunset nosed her way down the canal to the Sound. Presently salt water lapped her hull, Cavanaugh on the bridge signaled full speed ahead, and before noon she was tied up to the cannery dock, and the first machinery was going into her hold.

The day in part was spoiled for Cavanaugh. He had invited Marie to accompany him, but when she noticed Edna also aboard she had promptly refused.

"I'm not going if that girl is along," she declared.

"I'm sorry that you insist on taking such a foolish attitude, Marie. I've told you repeatedly our relationship is a business one, and no other. Miss Geary is a stockholder, and I can't very well order her off." He was silent a moment, then added firmly, "And wouldn't if I could."

"All right, I'm not going then." Marie stepped into her runabout, and drove down the boulevard at a rate of speed suggestive of inward rage.

M. CARTER TURNER was a fussy individual, but his appearance suggested ready money and lots of it. Few

men of the Pacific Coast business world knew him, but those who did claimed his first dollar had been doubled many times. His name, it might be added, was not listed in any city directory. Apparently he was an inquisitive soul, for he made two trips of inspection to the Sunset-when Cavanaugh wasn't about. His gray mustache bristled as he asked questions, and when the installation of the machinery was completed this mysterious stranger knew to a dollar the worth of the Sunset, and knew almost to a cent the amount of money Cavanaugh had on hand, and how much he needed. Then he visited various banks. The president of one seemed to recognize the caller and talked frankly.

"Be seated, Mr. Turner. So you are interested in the Sunset, too, eh? Well, there's a lot of money to be made out of the craft if handled right, but it takes money to start with. Cavanaugh has sense enough to know that he's not going to obtain it by rubbing a lamp, and he's been working night and day to raise funds to start on. I admire the fellow's nerve.

but---'

"Exactly. He should be in a state now where he's willing to take money, and not inquire as to its source," interrupted Turner.

The banker nodded. "You know a drowning man will swim to a water-logged plank and hang on for dear life—when there's no cork life belt handy. Should you tackle Mr. Cavanaugh I'm certain, Mr. Turner, he'd climb aboard in the hope your plank would float him to safety. Frankly, there's no cork life belt bobbing around on the financial sea into which he leaped recently."

Mr. Carter Turner moved fussily away, and the expression in the banker's eyes was a mixture of envy and admiration. Mr. Turner went directly to Cavanaugh, and his astuteness was not deceived a bit by the buoyant manner in which Cavanaugh and Edna greeted him. He guessed, rightly, that they had been staring dejectedly at each other' attempting to find a solution to their financial muddle.

"It is rather disappointing," began Mr. Turner, "for one to offer the best of security when one needs money, and find all

doors closed.

"Oh' we're doing nicely," replied Cavanaugh. Mr. Turner would have enjoyed testing this statement by a gesture, such as starting toward the door, but he was in too big a hurry. Instead he handed Cavanaugh a short-time note, filled out, ready to sign. Then he asked numerous questions and answered none.

"Who are you, anyway?" queried Cav-

anaugh bluntly.

"I can assure you I'm not an unknown benefactor," answered Turner with a grim note in his tone. "If you sign that note, and I think you will sign it because I've investigated this matter thoroughly, I expect to make money—good money. I shall also expect an agreement putting up the vessel as security. Also, I shall expect first rights to the pack you bring south, and shall hold the policy insuring the vessel and cargo; so in case you are wrecked——"

Apparently Mr. Turner had overlooked nothing. Cavanaugh was still stunned by the note. The amount was the exact amount he needed, within five hundred dollars. Someone else who knew the cannery game from A to Z had undoubtedly furnished the figures to Mr. Turner. It suggested that other "big fellows," aside from the Kalla people, believing Cavanaugh did not have a chance, were taking a hand.

Even admitting his dire need of funds, Cavanaugh hesitated to make the plunge, yet search as he might, he saw no possible The note would not fall due until several weeks after he expected to be back in Seattle with his pack sold. It was not an attempt to purchase stock and possibly obtain control. As he wavered, either by accident or design, a pack of bills slipped from Mr. Turner's pocket to the floor. They were crisp and decidedly pleasing to the touch as Cavanaugh gathered them up while Mr. Turner in his fussy way apologized and assisted. The contact was reacting strangely on Cavanaugh. The bills meant his big chance to succeed, to save that which he already had, and he could retain them by merely signing his name on a perfectly legal document. He did not hand the roll back to Mr. Turner, instead he placed it on the desk and reached for his pen.

"Shall I get the smelling salts?" inquired

Edna as Mr. Turner disappeared.

"Smelling salts wouldn't touch me," he replied. "That came like a bolt from a clear sky. Nobody knows a thing about Turner, except that he has a habit of doubling his money on every deal he has a finger in. He knew how much we needed;

knew that we needed it right now or we'd crash on the rocks, and he knew I'd take it because I had to. What do you think?"

"We were desperate when he came in," she admitted, "and I was beginning to think we must accept some proposition that would tie us hand and foot and take the profits and most of the principal. At least, we are free to act and to fight—and we are taking one chance already on Single Benedict."

"This came so easily, I'm suspicious. Perhaps one of the big rivals of the Kalla people has heard they had bought an interest through Benedict, and is deciding to take a hand itself. Edna," the name slipped out unintentionally, "we're going to be the center of a battle before summer is over—a regular free for all, knock down and drag out—if the big boys get to scraping over that site. Beyond a doubt they had other cards up their various sleeves, and never dreamed of a floating cannery dropping anchor off the site."

"Well, do you like a fight?"

Hayden grinned. "I'm not showing any indication of running out of it!"

"I wish I were going along!" she de-

clared. "I love the country."

"You are going along!" he announced, and Edna's surprise was only too apparent. "That is, if you want to, can make arrangements, and find some lady to go with you as companion."

"Of course I want to. Mrs. Lockwood, my aunt, will go. She's a regular fellow, too. But do you really need me? I realize

you can't take passengers."

"I need someone to handle the finances and books. You are secretary-treasurer of the company. And besides, I'm afraid they may try to put us out of business by an injunction, or something. By the time the courts moved, the run of Reds would be over, and they know it. I want the grantee of the permit on the job, with all of the necessary papers—or certified copies of them. Perhaps you'd better lock up the originals in Seattle, and we'll take photographic copies, properly authenticated."

CHAPTER IV

"STAND OFF."

AVANAUGH'S crew came aboard several days before sailing north. Single Benedict eyed them with an appraising eye. "Where'd you get 'em,

Cavanaugh?" he queried. "They don't look much like cannery hands to me. The Chinks that came aboard yesterday are all right, but this crowd—" He shrugged his shoulders.

"The American Legion furnished them, Benedict. We're in for trouble this summer, and I wanted men who thrive on trouble and know how to fight. The Legion had 'em."

Two hours before sailing a husky, twofisted individual carrying a bag on his shoulders came up the gang plank, made his way aft, selected a bunk, deposited his bag, then reported to Cavanaugh.

"Here's a note," he announced.

It was from the mysterious Mr. Turner, and brief.

Cavanaugh:

Manning is a good man. Appreciate it if you'll put him to work. Thank you.

Carter Turner.

"Where have you had experience?" inquired Cavanaugh, eyeing the man sharply. He was built for trouble.

"At the Associated Packers, one year. I'm an all around man, sir!" The man was almost defiant in his attitude.

"All right, Turner's recommended you highly, and that's enough, Manning. Make yourself at home."

"Aye, aye, sir!"

"Ex-Navy man," mused Cavanaugh. "He's got the stamp of the service about him. That about settles Turner's identity—he's one of the Associated Packers' men. Merry little crowd; wonder if the other canneries have men planted aboard?"

Cavanaugh's reflections were interrupted by a din on deck. He hurried to the bridge where he could observe what was taking place. The crew had taken points of observation, and were watching the Chinese, who were engaged in the strange ceremonial of putting the Wind God to route that the ship might have a fair voyage to the Bering Sea. Sacrifices of barbecued pork, candy and fruits were offered to placate the god. Large white papers, traced with intricate lines were offered, as the course the ship was to take, the theory being that the Wind God would become hopelessly lost in attempting to follow. The rattle of exploding firecrackers lent noise to the ceremony.

"They've done that for thousands of

years before putting to sea," said Cavanaugh to Edna and Mrs. Lockwood.

But he spoke absently as he watched the dock anxiously for a glimpse of Marie Heath. She had halfway promised to be down, and wish him a bon voyage. Fifteen minutes after sailing time he reluctantly gave the order to cast off lines. Astern the propeller kicked up the water, and the Sunset slowly backed away from the dock with her strange crew.

Single Benedict came up from below, and caught sight of the two women on the bridge. "What the—?" he began, then shrugged his shoulders helplessly. "What kind of a ship is this that takes women along? And I'll have to eat with 'em, too."

"Well, Kalla Packing," answered a voice, "if you don't like to eat with the ladies there are plenty that'll take your place." Single turned hurriedly. Manning, the man who had been recommended by Carter Turner, was regarding him with unfriendly eyes.

"Get below, Manning; you don't belong

on this deck," he snapped.

"I belong anywhere on this ship I feel like being," was the reply, but, nevertheless Manning went below to the section allotted to whites.

With the freedom of one feeling himself in a position of responsibility, Single mentioned the incident at the table that night. "Manning will bear watching, Cavanaugh. I don't know if you know it or not, but he's a Navy deserter, escaped from a Navy prison. Can't see why they haven't found him before."

"Why didn't you turn him in?" inquired

Cavanaugh.

"Because I want to live my normal span of life, Captain, and one way of shortening it is to go too far with Manning."

"Are you married, Mr. Benedict?" inquired Mrs. Lockwood pleasantly. She had already heard of Single's dislike for the reputed weaker sex, and was a great tease.

"I know when I'm well off," he growled in answer. "I'd like to bet both of you'll be either engaged or married before you leave Alaska again," he added. "Lots of women go up there to grab off a husband."

"Yes?" drawled Mrs. Lockwood to the amusement of Edna and Hayden. "But that shouldn't cause you the slightest worry, Mr. Benedict." Single took three sharp glances at her before resuming his meal; he had an idea he was being kidded.

A SHIP under full sail greeted them off Unimak Pass, and brought exclamations of delight from the women and a

thrill of pleasure to Cavanaugh.

"It's a rare sight," he exclaimed, "and a fearful comedown from the glory that was once hers to her present occupation of cannery ship. I love them and am proud to say that the ground work of my nautical training was on my father's wind-jammer."

"Where is she now, operated by some

cannery?" inquired the girl.

"Thank God, no!" he said fervently. "She went down at sea in a storm with flag flying; a fitting end."

The rhythm of the engines that had filled the Sunset day after day without break

suddenly stopped.

Cavanaugh leaped to the engine-room speaking tube. "What's the matter down there?"

"Haven't found out yet. Something broke. Will notify you in a moment," came the reply.

An ominous silence hovered over the craft, as she slowly swung around in the grip of a five-knot tide. Mrs. Lockwood turned gray, not from fear, but from seasickness, for they were in the trough of the sea, and hurriedly entered her stateroom. Cavanaugh studied the distant reef through binoculars. The reef was a long way off then, but the tide was taking them toward it rapidly.

The break in the engine-room did not just happen. It had been planned, timed for this particular moment.

Riding not far from the sailing craft they had remarked a Kalla Packing Company sea-going tug bucking the sea, and Cavanaugh watched her through the binoculars for several minutes. The lurching of the steamer frequently broke in on his vision, but he was quite sure one of the men in the tug's wheel-house was Langley. And then he saw a number of things not on the surface.

HE STEPPED to the engine-room speaking tube again. "Bad break?" The reply was equally brief. "Bad break. Sabotage, sir!"

"Is it serious, Hayden?" Edna inquired earnestly. The white water over the reef was visible to her now.

"Not for the people aboard, but for us as owners it's mighty serious. The people can be saved without difficulty," he explained.

"See," she cried, "the tug is coming this way. If we do get too close to the reef, they can send a line aboard."

"They can," he said grimly, "but I won't

ake it!"

"You won't!" She regarded him in dis-

"That's Langley's game, Edna. We're a vessel in distress, and unless we can bargain with him to tow us for a fixed rate we'll have to take his line. That's salvage; half the value of the ship, cargo and pending freight, Edna. Do you think he'll bargain with us?"

"Hardly," she replied. "I'd sooner go

on the rocks!"

Cavanaugh descended into the depths of the engine-room. He did not need to ask about the progress of repair. It was apparent. "Make a temporary repair, chief," he suggested, "one that will take us to sea, clear of the reef, and you can have a week to do the permanent job."

"That's what I figured on. And another thing, Captain. I'm trying to figure on the man that did this job. He knew just what to do and how to do it. It wasn't one of

my men, because I know 'em."

When Cavanaugh returned above, Edna was staring as if fascinated by the white water, her hands griping the bridge rail. She presented a picture of health, excitement, youth, but not fear—just grim determination.

"A fitting partner for a North country man," Cavanaugh exclaimed, "and if some North country man doesn't win her, it'll be

mighty strange."

Just then Manning touched him on the arm. "If you're curious about the engines breaking down this particular time, you might ask Single a few questions," he suggested.

"What do you know about it?" chal-

lenged Cavanaugh.

"Me? Nothing at all. I'm just suggesting, that's all, sir!" he replied. "He's a Kalla Bay man, you know."

"And you're with the Associated Pack-

ers."

"I was, sure, but I'm not now. I'm with the Cavanaugh-Geary Packing Company," he replied. "I'm loyal to my own gang."

There was food for thought in that, but Cavanaugh had no time for thought just then. The Kalla tug was alongside, her skipper leaning from cabin window with megaphone in hand.

"Want a line?" he bellowed.

"How much to tow me clear, Captain?"

countered Cavanaugh.

"Hayden!" The words were fairly snapped at Cavanaugh; he was actually startled. Edna was regarding him with a mixture of amazement and reproof. He smiled. So she thought he was weakening, eh? Asking the enemy for mercy.

"Admiralty Court can settle that little matter," replied the tug captain. "Right now, you're about due to crash." Cavanaugh glanced toward the white water, and inwardly prayed for the clatter of

turning engines.

"We want no line, sir!" Cavanaugh re-

plied. "Thanks."

The tug came closer and closer, a man on deck with coiled heaving line. Langley spoke in a low tone, and the man glanced toward the Sunset's crew grouped around on deck. The line circled and the lead arched upward, descending upon the Sunset's deck. Eager hands reached forth to grasp it, and were stayed by the thunder of Cavanaugh's voice from the bridge.

"Hands off that line! Get back, men.

Back!"

Amazed, they obeyed. The line slid over the rail, and the next lurch of the vessels jerked the lead clear. The megaphone swung around to bear on the tug's pilot house. "Stand off, damn you! Stand off! When I want a line I'll ask for it."

Langley thrust the tug skipper aside before he could reply, and shook his fist at Cavanaugh. "You'll take the line, Cavanaugh, or the underwriters will hear of it, and you'll not collect a damned cent."

"Which'll cost you several thousand dollars!" retorted Cavanaugh. The man might as well know that he knew the Kalla people had bought in to the *Sunset* through

Benedict.

Nevertheless the tug remained close at hand despite Langley's chagrin in not getting someone aboard to take a line. Cavanaugh was no fool, and he knew he must take a line before the *Sunset* drifted right onto the rocks. He had no intention of piling up. Those aboard the tug knew it also.

He watched the narrowing expanse of black water between ship and reef. 'They've beaten us," cried the girl. 'You've got to take the line. See that

mocking smile on Langley's face. Oh, I

could fight him right now!"

Cavanaugh nodded. He wanted to fight also, and what was more, he proposed to do so at the first opportunity. "How about it, chief?" he called through the tube.

"She won't stand the gaff, sir, but we

might try it!"

"Well, give her as much as you think

she'll stand, and see what happens."

Slowly the *Sunset* forged ahead, while those aboard were tense in the expectancy of another break. The steamer swung around and, barely making headway against the tide, drew clear of the reef.

"It's now safe to smile, Edna!" Hayden

announced.

"If Langley wasn't aboard the tug I'd wave my hand," she said. "I'm going to do it, anyway!" She fluttered a farewell with her handkerchief.

"And now for the man who did the job," growled Cavanaugh, as he turned the bridge over to the first officer. "A head is going to fall, perhaps Benedict's, perhaps Manning's, but there is going to be an example made for the benefit of the others."

He commenced with Benedict and Manning, for both had been seen in the engine room, according to members of the black gang. There were others, too, who had appeared at different times and watched the machinery curiously. It was a man size job to weed the guilty man from the innocent.

Not even Ah Goon was spared. Ah Goon made pies of very high quality, which he sold to members of the crew and cannery hands. Ah Goon shook his head solemnly. What words he spoke were pretty close to being the President's American, as distinguished from the King's English. "Ah Goon keep eye peeled, an' ear open. Let you know, Cap!"

"All right, Goon, if you hear anything,

let me know!"

AN is a creature of habit. In Alaska he goes to bed at bed time, though the sun may remain on the job all night long during the summer. Ah Goon slipped quietly from his bunk and made his way to the upper deck. The decks were deserted, except two men forward were smoking as they walked the width of the deck.

"Slip cap an earful!" muttered Goon as he made his way toward Cavanaugh's door. "Tell him who break engine machinery. Damned cuss!"

Cavanaugh heard his knock. "Come in!" he called, then again, "Come in!" A sob came distinctly through the door, then a tired sigh. "Edna," he whispered, "what's happened?" He donned an overcoat over his pajamas, and opened the door.

The body of Ah Goon lay at his feet. He had died without sound except the sob and the tired sigh. Cavanaugh searched the gear and the boats lashed to the upper

"Poor devil," he muttered, "he'd unearthed something, and was on his way to report it. Someone took a big chance to keep him from speaking. Killed him right at my door. Well, that shows the lengths to which they will go. Hello, thought I saw a head over there."

The head came up a ladder, followed by the rest of the body; Single Benedict. He hardly looked as if he had just committed a murder, but he was the only one in the vicinity, and he had only emerged when Cavanaugh's footsteps indicated that someone was so close that he must certainly be observed.

"Ah Goon's been murdered!" said Cav-

anaugh suddenly.

"The devil you say!" exclaimed Single. "Why, I saw him coming up that ladder not five minutes ago."

"See anyone else around, Benedict?"

"Not a soul." Then, evidently seeing he was making a case against himself, he

lapsed into silence.

The murder of Ah Goon created no end of excitement. An examination of the body disclosed the cause of death. A knife wound made by one who knew exactly where to strike. Amid strange rites of his fellows, Goon was buried at sea the next Unimak Pass lay astern, and the waters of Bering Sea, sullen and black, seemed to fairly leap to claim the body. Edna and Cavanaugh both felt the depression more than the others. Goon had tried to be a faithful servant, brief as had been his period of employment.

By noon the whites had relegated the affair to the limbo of incidents, and the Chinese-well, one could never tell what was going on in their minds. man was vending pies that night-pies of

not so good a quality as Goon's.

"What will be next?" Who will be

next?" cried Edna in dismay. She could not put the two incidents, the attempted wrecking of the ship and the killing of Goon from her mind. They had come swiftly, unexpectedly, and the steamer had but just entered the Bering Sea.

A lull followed, a lull that lasted until they had dropped anchor in Kalla Bay. The great gulf of water known as Bristol Bay was dotted with icebergs, through which the white winged sailing vessels were making their way. There was a romance about it not to be denied, and the cold wind and excitement had put color into Edna Geary's cheeks that caused more than one admiring glance to be cast her way from the Legion men aboard. Here was a girl worth fighting for. And they would doubtless have to fight for her, if the present lull meant anything. Experience had taught them a lull presaged a new outbreak of a storm.

CHAPTER V

LANGLEY STACKS THE DECK

HERE are some canneries in the North that look only to the immediate present. They take their toll of fish, thinking only of present profits, ignoring or getting around the letter and spirit of the law; packing only the highest grade of fish, and dumping out the less valued species of the silver horde to drift to the beach by thousands, to profane the air with the stench of their rotting bodies. Such a cannery was the Kalla Packing Company. It recruited its forces from hell's thickest scum; wrecks of humanity who toiled the fishing season through, spent their earnings at the Kalla store, and returned at the end of the season with a few dollars-if they hadn't gambled them away coming south.

One year the company had emptied a county jail-release being conditioned on the culprits signing up for the season with the Kalla people. Two had leaped overboard from the ship before it left Puget Sound, one had made it to shore. The

other drowned.

There are other canneries, of highest business repute, who obey the laws of the land, look to the future and select their employees with care, but they were not located on Kalla Bay.

Langley stepped ashore and looked

around. The crew that had preceded him had put things in shape. They would be ready when the Reds came. In the distance he could see the *Sunset* riding at anchor in a sheltered cove. It was a maddening sight, particularly as the fishing was at its best off that spot during the run.

"Hello, Langley!"

At sound of the voice the manager turned, but the man who came toward him did not offer to shake hands. When Langley extended his hand, the other accepted it

"Rather surprised to see me in these parts, eh?" he said. "Well, I'm surprised to be here myself. There's been too much trouble around this cannery the past couple of years, and they figured they'd better have a deputy marshal on the job."

"We've always had one, Gibbon!"

"I know it, but he was kinda lopsided. He was your man and lopped on your side. The other side was kinda thin, and gave the natives and the whites that happened along the worst of it. Now me, well as everybody knows, I'm what you might call symmetrical. I'm looking forward to a right peaceful period in these parts. You might pass the word around amongst your men that things ain't what they used to be, providing any of 'em lived to come back a second year."

"That's not necessary, Gibbon!" snapped Langley.

"Oh, yes it is—that and a lot more. Now I've had my say, and a word to the wise is sufficient. Nobody ever accused you of being a boob, whatever else they might have charged you with."

Having, as he said, said his say, the marshal wandered down the dock to look the China gang over. He expected to find trouble there sooner or later without half-looking.

"So they run old Gibbon in down here, eh?" Langley was plainly disturbed. "I wonder if Cavanaugh had strings he could pull to bring that about. You can't bluff Gibbon, and he won't listen to reason. He's one of the old-fashioned man-hunters who's lived poor and will die poor." Langley might have added, "and honest." He entered his office and found it ready for occupancy. "Well, I've got to get rid of Gibbon before the fun starts," he declared.

HIS he proceeded to do, choosing a day when Gibbon had cruised down the bay to pay his respects to Cavanaugh, and incidentally size him up. A miserable drug-ridden Mexican was one pawn. The man needed dope, and Langley supplied it. "Now get this straight, José," he said, "the reason you haven't money to buy dope with is because the negro, Sam, cheated you in the crap game. He cheats everybody, so stay away from him."

Langley saw the dark eyes flash vengefully, and knew that he had said enough. Unconsciously, José fingered his knife. One can't confine mixed races in the dark holds of a ship for days, and have harmony.

Langley gave Sam an order that took him beyond the limits of the cannery, and followed him himself. He knew the outcome before he gave Sam the order. The negro hummed a tune, for being once more on land made him happy. In an isolated spot, José leaped from his hiding place with gleaming knife and snarling words. The knife slashed the negro's arm before he could draw his own weapon and fire. Then José crumpled up, his blade slashing the tundra.

For several moments Sam regarded his work in horror. "Oh, lordy lordy!" he groaned, "I killed him. Hones' I couldn't help it, hones' he'd killed me with that knife. Oh lordy—" He broke off. Perhaps no one had witnessed the affair. His eyes darted about, and he saw Langley standing on the knoll, locking down. The manager came on the run.

"What's this, Sam?" he demanded sharply, as though he had not instigated the whole affair. Briefly Sam explained, his voice filled with horror.

"You saw it, Boss, you saw him pull his knife and slash, you saw him, boss didn't you? I never harmed nobody before, boss!"

"That may be true, Sam, but you'll have a difficult time explaining it. Everybody knows you won money from José coming up."

"Them weren't educated dice, boss, they

was hones', hones' they was."

"I know that. Listen, Sam, you've committed murder! Murder! Sam, you've got to get out of the country, immediately. Gibbon, the marshal, is a terror. He'll never rest until he finds you, but you've got a fair start. Come back to the cannery, get plenty of grub and clear out. Work

up the river, and don't stop. You're a strong man, Sam, and can carry plenty of grub."

"Thanks, boss, thanks for giving me a chance. I know you know I didn't mean to."

Langley took good care he did not observe Sam's departure. To clear his own skirts, he had jailed the negro in a store room used for that purpose on occasion. The official jail was empty, locked, and Gibbon had the key—which was convenient.

News of the killing had reached Gibbon shortly before he returned to the cannery. A passing motor boat suggested he had better hurry. "What about the killing?" he

demanded of Langley.

"Some row between a Mexican and negro. I happened along just as the nigger had finished the job. I did not encounter any particular resistance when I arrested him. The jail was locked, so I cooped him up in a store-room. He flew the coop. On checking up, I find he's taken a quantity of grub and evidently intends to resist capture."

Gibbon regarded Langley with open suspicion. "Sounds all right, Langley, but peace officers in this country have learned to take your stories with a grain of salt, and poke around for the truth else-

where."

Nevertheless, Gibbon took the trail at once, though Sam had a six-hour lead and panic resulted in his covering his tracks fairly well. Langley watched the marshal depart with outward satisfaction. He was rid of him. If the negro could only keep the marshal guessing for three or four weeks the run of Reds would be over by that time.

"Just suppose," he mused, "the nigger killed Gibbon. He's crazy enough to do 'most anything, thanks to the scare I threw into him. Well, what if he does? Gibbon's been a thorn in the side long enough."

HEN he called his fishermen together. A few were legitimate, but for the most part they were riff-raff he had picked up for the purpose of driving all opposition from the Kalla Bay trap site. He pointed to the Sunset. "She's dropped anchor where the best fishing is, men. Her boats will get the cream of it, so it's up to you. There are many of you and few of them. The marshal is on a wild goose chase, and

won't be seen in these parts for many days unless he has a lot of luck. When the Reds run, chase the others off and take 'em. I don't care what you do, but I don't want to know what it is. I'm interested in fish; the more salmon you bring in, the better for me. That's all, men." He started to turn away. "No, it isn't either. Most of you know Single Benedict by sight, and those of you who don't, can have him pointed out to you. Remember, whatever you do, don't touch Benedict. He may put up a fine bluff, but he'll not hurt any of you. He's one of our gang."

The first personal encounter between Langley and Cavanaugh took place a week before the Red run started. It came so unexpectedly that Langley did not have an opportunity to resort to his usual tactics and stack the deck. To the manager's amazement, Cavanaugh stepped from his launch, walked down the dock, and entered the Company's store. Langley happened to be alone at the time. He looked up, then, realizing he was on his own ground.

became threatening.

"You clear out of here, Cavanaugh," he shouted, "and stay aboard your own vessel. The Company's store is not selling goods except to people employed by us, or the natives; and it's not selling to you at any price. Clear out before I arrest you

for trespassing."

Cavanaugh grinned cheerfully. "I don't want to buy anything from you, Langley, at any price, but you're going to serve me whenever I see fit to ask it. I'm coming ashore every time I feel like it, and what's more, I'm coming into your store." Then he played his ace. "You're postmaster, Langley, and I've called for my mail."

"You haven't any mail!"

"Perhaps not, but I've called to see if I have."

"Your real purpose here was to size things up, to look over my men. The mail part of it is just a stall." Langley was furious because he knew the other's argument was unanswerable. He ran through the mail hurriedly. "Nothing for you!" he snapped.

"Strange," muttered Cavanaugh with a fine show of disappointment. "I had written to a correspondence school relative to taking a course in salmon canning. I should certainly have received a circular. Well, thanks, I'll call again."

"And if you do, Cavanaugh," Langley

fumed inwardly, "I'll be ready for you."

He watched the broad back and swinging shoulders disappear down the dock, and he noticed Cavanaugh was carefully sizing up the men about, and the equipment.

The relief on Edna's face when Cavanaugh returned thrilled him strangely. "And I have no business being thrilled by the relief on any girl's face except Marie Heath's," he told himself in his cabin. Marie looked at him from a silver frame. "About time for a letter, isn't it, little girl?" he queried aloud.

From the cabin window he could see a pair of feet and sturdy legs. Presently they were joined by smaller feet and even sturdier legs. "Now don't you try to escape, Mr. Benedict," came Mrs. Lockwood's cool tones. "I saw you start ner-

vously as I came in sight."

Apparently Mrs. Lockwood seated herself, for Cavanaugh could now see four heels in a row, Benedict's heels moving nervously. "Where is the husband I came for, Mr. Benedict?" the lady pursued remorselessly. "You said all unmarried women came to Alaska for the purpose of securing husbands. Well, trot him out, and let me look him over. I haven't seen anything yet worthy of special notice. Present company excepted, of course, Mr. Benedict, because the world knows your attitude on the matter. It'll be a terrible blow to my sex when more of them hear about it."

"I wish she wouldn't kid that fellow," growled Cavanaugh to himself. "She'll get him riled up, and he's going to make

trouble enough as it is."

And that was just what she was doing. If a man wished to remain single that was his business. She had married the best man in the world, might he rest in peace, and no one had aroused the slightest interest since he had passed on five years before. Just the same she resented Single's attitude that she and her niece were excess baggage. Certainly Edna was filling a very important role in handling the books and funds, and she was helping, too. Even Cavanaugh had to show good cause before she approved of an expenditure.

Apparently Single recovered somewhat from the attack. "I'll look around and see if I can't find you a man; that is, if I decide I don't want you myself. I'm think-

ing it over," he said solemnly.

"Now, what do you think of that?" chuckled Cavanaugh at the comeback.

The one bit of recreation those aboard the *Sunset* enjoyed was during the few days previous to the run of Reds. And then they came, and all forces girded up for work and battle.

CHAPTER VI

THE RUN OF REDS

IME and tide wait for no man, neither do salmon. Man must be ready or he loses his silver harvest that brings in gold. The pack must be completed within three or four weeks, or not at all. Other grades follow later, but do not bring the price the red salmon bring, and cost as much to pack. They are weeks of hectic activity, but the days are long—too long in fact for those who rely on the hours of darkness for executing their plots.

The first salmon came aboard the Sunset, just enough to start the machinery, and keep it running for an hour or more. Edna, in rubber boots and clothing, fed the first salmon into the iron chink, followed it through the conveyors to the deft machine that fills and covers the cans, personally labeled the first can, and bore it away in triumph amid the cheers of the crew.

Cavanaugh watched the returning Kalla boats—for that day they had kept off the Cavanaugh-Geary fishing grounds — and noted they were riding light. Already he had partly guessed the truth—the run this year would be light, and the fight for the fish would be more desperate than ever.

During those early July days the sun did not set until after nine o'clock, and twilight lingered until ten-thirty. The brief period of darkness was over by one-thirty in the morning. Yet during that brief period a man came out of the darkness in a bidarka, thrust a note beneath the door of Single Benedict's room aboard the Sunset, and as silently vanished.

"I'm going ashore, sir," he informed Cavanaugh next day; "the mail boat is docking, and I'm expecting a letter or two.

Can you spare me?"

Cavanaugh was expecting something of the sort. "Very well," he said. "You might bring off any mail you find for me."

Langley was on hand to meet Benedict when he noticed he had come alone. "I'll

be brief!" he explained. "You're prepared to take care of things, I suppose, to

play up to my game, Benedict!"

"Yep, I could not very well come ashore before. Had no excuse, for the *Sunset* crowd and the Kalla crowd can't very well chum together. Where's the marsha?"

"Still up the river looking for Sam. I hope neither of 'em ever come back."

"Pretty clever work, Langley. I only know what I hear, but I know your ability You wanted to get rid of Gibbon and tha was a good way, though tough on Sam and the Mex."

"People are made to use. If you don't use 'em, you're overlooking some mighty good cards."

"That's right!" agreed Single. "Any

mail for Cavanaugh?"

"A bunch, including a letter from the fair Marie. I'm keeping an eye on his mail, naturally." Langley handed Single the packet. "By the way, Single, something's going to drop soon, but don't worry, you're safe enough. You know me!"

"Yes—and thanks! I'll be listening for

the crash!"

E VEN to those who follow the salmon year after year, the mystery of it all is ever present. What wonderful thing is it that causes the fish to return unerringly to the stream of their spawning to spawn in turn and die; to come from the ocean from no one knows where; to follow up the stream, always going against the current higher and higher until the salt water is scores of miles behind; to seek the creeks, hurling their bodies across shallows or climbing waterfalls with swift charges; until, battered and bruised, they lay their eggs in sandy shallows. Spring finds the creeks alive with young salmon; finds the brush filled with bones of the dead, left there by high waters.

As it is with the Reds, so it is with the silvers, humpbacks, and lowly dogs. Time was when they choked the creeks until their backs gleamed above water; filled traps until the nets burst, and those in the bottom of the spillers were smothered by weight of numbers. But the fish that are caught do not reach the creeks to spawn, and so each year their numbers become less. Kalla had not worried particularly because they had been fishing on a Government site when the Government was otherwise occupied. But this year a duly authorized

occupant was on the site. Partially filled boats meant partially filled cans and purses. The fishermen in Langley's employ became resentful day by day, and Langley waited until the strain reached the breaking point, then gave them a free hand; but watched himself from a safe distance.

Peacefulness had caused relaxation on the part of the others aboard the Sunset. but not on Cavanaugh's. He was not dezeived, yet he forgot his affairs for one brief period while he hurried through his The letter from Marie trusted everything was going nicely, but did not express a great amount of confidence. Apparently she still resented the fact they were unable to marry in June. Cavanaugh had been willing, but she balked at accompanying him for the summer "on a smelly fishing steamer." She had been running about a bit with Walsh and knew, of course, Hayden wouldn't mind that, because no one regarded Walsh seriously.

"They may not regard him seriously," he growled, "but they're not unmindful of his wealth!" It was not a pleasant thought. He read further. "And I know you are not lonesome with your pretty school teacher." At this point Cavanaugh blew up. No man likes to have his motives, particularly honorable motives, mis-

construed.

He wrote a hot reply, then tore it up. Then he turned to his remaining mail. There was quite a lot of it, personal letters, advertisements and—a letter from Carter Turner. It was brief, provokingly so.

Dear Mr. Cavanaugh:
Discharge Manning immediately. My
mistake. Sorry!

Carter Turner.

"Deuce of a time to discover a mistake," he fumed. "Hello, this stationery looks familiar." He turned it to the light and examined the water mark. The discovery was anything but reassuring. "The Cavanaugh Company's own stationery," he exclaimed, "one of the second sheets. The others have the firm name at the top. Sent in a plain envelope. Huh!" It was a poser. Either the Associated Packer had bought out his father's estate, lock, stock and barrel, or else— No, it did not seem possible, still Judge Keene had once been

counsel for the Associated Packers before taking over the Cavanaugh affairs. Then he thought of Manning. The man had behaved himself throughout the voyage so far as he knew. He really had nothing against him but suspicions. Cavanaugh probed deeper. "Maybe he was responsible for the breakdown off Unimak Pass and, failing to prevent us from reaching the trap site, they want to get rid of him. Oueer! I'll watch that fellow."

And that reminded him of something else. It was necessary to erect a building ashore to show good faith and hold the site for the future. That must be attend-

ed to soon.

Cavanaugh hurried out on deck. "Where's Edna?" he inquired of Mrs. Lockwood. On her insistence Single Benedict had been explaining the "iron chink"

to her.

"Fishing," she replied. "She was telling of an experience on Puget Sound when she caught a steel-head on light tackle and landed him—a twenty-pounder, I believe she said it was. It took a half-hour to land it. Mr. Benedict replied no woman could do it, and she's taken some light tackle and agreed to bring in three salmon to prove it."

"Who took her out?"

"She rowed the dory out herself, but one of the men, Manning, I think it was, agreed to do the rowing while she fished. He was to report whether she landed the fish unaided."

"Yes, it was Manning," Single put in. Cavanaugh was uneasy-all the more so in view of the letter he had just receivedbut he gave no outward indication. Was a plot of some nature being instigated by Single and Manning? He was prepared for anything, things had been quiet so long. And twilight was coming on, too. He searched the waters with his binoculars. The tide was running out swiftly, even for waters where swift tides are common. The Sunset's fishermen were dotting the water far out, and some distance away he made out a dory with two people in it. Both were dressed in oilskins, for the sky was overcast and threatening rain. It was impossible to tell at this distance, but it was doubtless the Sunset's dory. Then as he watched, the scene changed. The boats drew together, even the dory started toward the other craft nearest it. And then he understood. Bearing down on the Sunset's fishermen were a number of gill net craft,

in tow of a heavy gas boat.

"Come on, Single!" ordered Cavanaugh. "The fun's commenced!" A few scattered reports came across the water. The Sunset's fishermen were taking no chances; but Cavanaugh knew this fight would not be settled with pistols, but by fists and oars wielded by strong men. It was for this hour he had chosen his men. Would they stand the test? He thought they would, and his place was in the thick of it. He only hoped Langley would be present. "Come on, Single!"

"Coming!" replied Single. There was no reason for him remaining behind, for Langley's instructions had been explicit on that point. "Don't hurt Benedict, he's one of

our crowd."

IN THE coming battle Cavanaugh determined Benedict should be well toward the front, where he could be observed. Mrs. Lockwood called down to them from above, just as the boat shoved off, "If there's trouble you tell Edna to come back immediately. I don't want her hurt."

"All right!" replied Cavanaugh as the

power dory shot ahead.

Cavanaugh laid a course that would intercept Edna's tiny craft, but the Kalla Packing Company's fleet drew in ahead of him. Instantly the air was filled with noise of the tumult. The few desultory shots gave way to curses and the crashing of falling oars and struggling men. No chance to use a gun now, the danger from one would be as great to friend as foe.

A power boat shot across the bow of Cavanaugh's boat, her three men ready to grapple with the opposing two. Benedict gripped an oar and Cavanaugh shut off the motor an instant before the craft crashed together. His oar crashed downward, taking a man with it. A Sunset boat came to the rescue, and the three craft swirled along

on the seething tide.

"That's Benedict," yelled a voice, "but the other fellow's Cavanaugh. Get him! Get him!" Cavanaugh laid a man low in the opposing boat, just as a Kalla boat joined the fighting group. He downed another man, and then the sky overhead seemed to crash down upon him. Was it thunder or a blow? He pondered foolishly as he crumpled to the boat. He had a hazy view of struggling legs, and saw Benedict either leap, or perhaps he was knocked. overboard; then unconsciousness stole over

Cavanaugh could not have been unconscious more than five minutes. Perhaps it was less. The struggle was continuing in the twilight, and he was alone. He stood up unsteadily and looked about. A boat with three men was rushing toward the dory in which Manning and the girl were drifting. In the madness of the battle it was unlikely that they would notice one of the occupants was a girl. Edna was dressed as the men, and it was well she was, for the rain was coming down in torrents and an off-shore squall was aiding the tide. Cavanaugh started the motor, and hurried toward them, standing with cupped hands.

"'Vast, you idiots, 'vast!" he bellowed, using, in his excitement, a term that he rarely employed. "'Vast! That's a girl!

'Vast!"

"'Vast and be damned to you!" yelled a second voice, and an upraised oar dropped Manning. Or did he fall just ahead of the blow? Cavanaugh groaned at his helplessness as the second man in the enemy boat lifted an oar and crashed it down on Edna's head. The girl crumpled so quickly that it seemed as if the descending oar's progress was hardly impeded.

The occupants of the Kalla boat, maddened with success, set a course toward Cavanaugh. Here was one boat in the clear. He groped about in the bottom of the dory for his automatic, which he could now use without danger to friends. An unseen hand stayed the progress of his craft; the engine stopped with a tired cough.

"Now what?" he exclaimed angrily.

He wanted to dispose of the other craft, then rush to Edna's aid. The dory was drifting rapidly with wind and tide, riding high, a fine victim for the wind.

He looked astern and understood. The propeller had fouled a gill net, partially filled with fish. He could see the gleaming bodies floundering in the twilight and the net vanished under the stern of his craft. He bent low and slashed with a knife, desperately trying to sever the strands before the other craft could reach him.

"It's Cavanaugh!" It was a different voice shouting this time. "Get him, boys!"

Cavanaugh leaped to his feet, and faced Langley. There was little room in his own craft for the sort of a fight he knew was coming and, adopting a cardinal principle of the sea, he carried the fight to the other.

His swinging oar sent the first opponents sprawling to escape its blow, then he leaped aboard and fought his way toward Langley. The narrowness of the craft made it impossible for them to get behind him. Only one man could face him at a time, and that man did not last long. It was a rough and tumble fight without quarter. From his place of safety astern Langley caught up an oar. He could not bring it down, but, using it as a lance, he charged. The hurled oar passed his own man, and the handle was driven into Cavanaugh's stomach. No living man could resist such a blow. A cry of agony burst from his lips, his hands grasped the oar, hands strangely powerless and numb, then he slipped overboard.

"We got him, Langley! See there, he's tangled up in that gill net. He'll drown in a minute!" Instinctively Cavanaugh struggled to free himself from the strands that yielded at his every movement, yet always clung tenaciously. "He's drowning, Langley!"

"Let him! He attacked us; we didn't attack him!"

CHAPTER VII

CASUALTIES

NDNA was one of those fortunate per-, sons who never experienced a headache. When consciousness returned the rain was drenching her face. It was a cold, nasty rain, driven by a raw wind, but she rather liked it, because her head was pounding furiously and lights danced before her eyes. The oar had come down squarely on her head. Two things had saved her, the sou'wester she was wearing and the heavy cushion of hair directly between head and oar. The dory was bob-bing about violently, but presently when her senses cleared somewhat she managed to find the oars. Her fishing gear was scattered about the bottom of the boat. Also two salmon she had caught with light tackle. But for the battle she would have undoubtedly won a bet from Single Benedict.

Manning stirred slightly, and when she took the oars he recovered completely. It was a different Manning than she had known aboard the boat.

"Just leave those oars where they are," he ordered. "We're going to drift through life together for a while."

"What do you mean?" she demanded.
"Just that. Nobody ever accused me of failing to grab a chance. I'm grabbing one—that's all. That row between the two gangs of fishermen was just what I needed to finish up a little plan of my own. When the big fellows are fighting, a little fellow can grab something and run, if he's got his eyes open."

"Then you were not hit with an oar?"
"Nope, not me. I saw it coming and dropped. If you'd have done the same instead of trying to fight back, you'd have saved yourself a crack on the head. Still,

maybe you wouldn't be here."

"Who won the fight?" While she was asking questions her mind was rapidly seeking means of escape. Manning had played a shrewd game. Not once had he made a move that anyone could object to. At all times he had been obedient, but when the time came to strike, the mask dropped.

"I don't know who won the fight," he replied, "and I don't care. I saw Cavanaugh

go overboard in the row and—"

"He was saved!" she exclaimed. It was half a question, half insistence prompted

by hope.

"Hmmm, so that's the way the land lays, and him engaged to another girl. Maybe I can— Still it's all business with him. The girl back in Seattle—" Manning was muttering to himself as he planned. "I'll tell you one thing, Miss Geary, and that's this: If you make a break, or squawk out, I'll bang you over the head with an oar, and I'll bang hard enough so you'll feel it through that pile of brown hair."

"Well, what are you going to do with me? Surely I'm not so important a person as to figure in your plans?" she said at

length.

"You're a cool one, ain't scared and that makes you dangerous," he replied. "As to what I'm going to do with you, you'll find out. I didn't expect to have you on my hands this quick, but now you're here, I'll work out the rest." He regarded her studiously. "Never quite realized how pretty you was before."

THEN he took the oars. She marveled at the strength that made it possible for him to maintain the pace. Evidently now that they were beyond earshot of any of the gill netters he proposed to put the dory out of sight before daylight. For two

hours he rowed steadily, then his pace became slower. The wind and tide had helped a lot. Now the tide was turning. He did not buck it, but made for shore. Both were hungry, so he built a fire and broiled salmon on the end of a stick. It was flat tasting, and half raw. She ate a little and stopped, sick and disgusted.

"You'll probably have to eat a lot of it," he remarked, "because we haven't any

grub."

When the tide again turned he set off, rowing steadily until at length he came to a bleak rock. It was almost sheer, and storms had eroded it until it overhung in many places. The water beneath was white as it surged amid the black rocks and was

sucked back again.

Manning did not seem at all disturbed. On top of the island tundra grew where the rocks permitted it. Otherwise it was desolate. He faced the dory toward the reef, then waited; presently a larger wave than usual surged in from the sea. Manning bent to the oars with long, hard strokes, and they rode swiftly on the crest, nearly capsized in white water, then rested in the comparatively calm water of a small lagoon. Not a dozen rods away the girl saw the remains of a schooner. Its masts had gone by the boards as it had driven over the reef, but the hull seemed in fair condition.

Manning moored their craft to the broken rail of the wreck. "Get aboard!" he ordered.

Edna wasn't ready just yet to bring things to a showdown. Somewhat reluctantly she obeyed. He tugged at the door of the cabin which had opened amidships, then pulled it slowly open. With a sweep of his arm she was sent through the opening. The door banged shut. "You can't open it, so you don't need to try. You can get plenty of fresh air through them deadlights if you open 'em. One's broken. You're safe enough if no storm comes up, and I'll know you won't be climbing to the top of the island to start fires and maybe attract attention."

She heard the thud of oars as he prepared to shove off, and presently their steady rise and fall as he rowed across the lagoon. She tried desperately to see where he went, but the list in the wrecked craft made it impossible to see other than the rock towering above.

Edna slumped down on a damp bench,

suddenly weak from excitement and lack of food. She should have fought furiously from the first, but what chance would she have had? Perhaps she had been wise after all, for she had at least conserved her strength. The whole thing was incredible. Perhaps the blow had so dazed her she was dreaming and would presently awaken. "No, it's all too real for that!" she sighed. "I wonder where Manning went to, and when he'll return?"

OR was Edna the only casualty of that fight. Aboard the Sunset Mrs. Lockwood was frantically asking the men for her niece. One of the crew was missing, the others were bandaging wounds. They had seen nothing of Edna, nor of Cavanaugh; they had been too busy for that. And where was Benedict? He, too, was missing. The mate was there all right, the logical man to take command had they been at sea, but they were not at sea, but anchored—a commercial enterprise and not a ship under way.

To the amazement of everyone, Mrs. Lockwood called them together. "It seems advisable," she explained, "to proceed with the canning, and do our investigating on

the side. What do you think?"

"We're ready, Mrs. Lockwood. Cavanaugh has this thing organized, so it will run itself," replied one. "We're packing gats from now on."

The good lady was somewhat shocked at the battered faces, yet she felt a sense of pride. They seemed to have enjoyed the fight. She despatched a motor boat to search the shore for signs of Manning and the girl, then waited for results.

Over at the Kalla Packing Company's plant Langley was taking stock, while Single Benedict was tilted back in a chair in the office.

"You know who got the worst of the fight, Single," growled Langley. "We did! Why didn't you tell me the sort of a gang Cavanaugh had lined up, and I'd have sent down more men. We outnumbered them as it was, but my crowd—scum!" He fairly shouted the word. "But it wasn't a one-sided affair by a long shot. I've got one souvenir, and I'm going to keep him. Hauled him aboard in a net like a fish, half-drowned. Want a look at him?"

"No, he might get away. I guess I'll be getting back to the ship. Things are doubt-

less in a mess by this time," replied Benedict.

"Keep 'em that way. Pack a little and tell the fishermen what you can't use we'll take, and see that you can't use the most of it. There'll be a change in a few days

that'll give us all of it."

Langley here ran through the mail and took out an envelope, then he made his way to the cannery prison. It was not the storeroom from which the frightened Sam had escaped, but a more formidable structure. Langley thrust the letter between the bars. "A letter for you," he said tauntingly. "And how are we after the battle?"

"Fine and ready for more, Langley. You don't think this is the end, do you?" retorted Cavanaugh. His clothing was still damp from the fall into the water, and the room was not heated. Rage and exertion

alone kept him warm.

"This is all the battle you're going to be in for the time being, Cavanaugh. By the time you get out of this there'll be nothing to battle for."

"Nothing except false arrest and damages for unlawful detention—enough to fight like hell for, Langley," replied Cavanaugh. "Think that over, particularly from the legal angle."

"Thanks," laconically, "I have. You attacked us. We weren't in the affair at

all.

"So I noticed, keeping safely out of the way until one of our boats mixed in. You welcomed me with open arms. You've been out to bust us from the first, Langley. You know it, and so do I."

"Usually start what I finish, Cavanaugh. I guess we understand each other perfectly. In the meantime, listen to the hum of machinery! We're packing Reds." The sound of machinery came quite distinctly, and the vibration shook Cavanaugh's cell steadily.

So he was here until Gibbon returned, at least? The old peace officer would listen to the story, and promptly release Cavanaugh, but the run of the red horde would be over by that time. Then he read the letter. Quickly at first, then slowly. His strong hand crumpled it, and he thrust the ball into his pocket. "I've got to get out," he muttered, "get out where I can do something."

There were many accounts to be settled: the attempt to wreck the *Sunset*, the death of Goon, Single's appearance on the scene, and his lack of explanation at the time.

And Benedict was on the job now. Cavanaugh glanced up at the window with its bars. It was growing twilight outside. "Here goes," he snapped, and up-ended the

iron cot in the cell.

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He had found the weakest spot, the bars. One by one he tore or worked them from the wood, then broke the glass. The lapping of water came distinctly to his ears. He thrust his head through the opening. As he had guessed, he was on the water side of the building. The other side was built against the shore. It was a twenty-foot drop and the water might be deep or shallow. He hoped that it was deep; then he dropped.

CHAPTER VIII

ANOTHER ANGLE

JUDSON WALLACE, counsel, was attempting a difficult rôle—he was trying to be pompous and seasick at the same time. It can't be done. The power boat moved swiftly toward the huddled buildings. "That's the Kalla Packing Company's plant ahead, sir!" stated the mate.

"Thank God, then my troubles are over for the time being." Wallace presumed the steamer in the cove was the Sunset, and he noticed two groups of boats-at respectable distance apart. Langley was there to meet him. Judson Wallace gave him a soft paw. "Well, here I am," he said complainingly. "How did you know I was at Seward? It's getting so a man can't take a vacation any more. What's the cause of this damned foolishness any-What's way? It cost the Company money to hire a gas boat to bring me over here, and I suffered untold agony. I've got to go through it again to get back. Well, here's your injunction against the Cavanaugh-Geary people. It'll be heard in a few days-when the commissioner gets over and holds court. In the meantime it's effective. But I'm telling you right now it won't stick. If they've a permit all proper, you can't keep 'em off their site. They'll have to produce the permit, of course. Let's see; here's a court order giving you the right as a stockholder to take over the Cavanaugh-Geary Company's affairs if something happens to the principal stockholders. You're using that as an ace, I take it. And lastly, here's your commission as Deputy United States Marshal. I couldn't get them to give you authority over Gibbon; you're in charge only during his absence and subject to his orders. Believe that's all. Now give me a bed that's soft and don't go jumping around. I'll consider food later."

Langley pocketed the papers gleefully. He had overlooked nothing, and if he couldn't get them one way, he could another. He had a hunch that there would be a mighty good buy in a floating cannery and trap site this coming winter. If the Sunset's fishermen, under Benedict's instructions, were willing to sell him their fish, all right. If not, or if Cavanaugh in some way escaped, or Edna took a hand in things, then the injunction would be served; and he would serve it as deputy marshal, and would enjoy the situation. He could picture the pent up rage aboard the Sunset, and no one aboard would dare lift a finger against him. He settled back, and listened to the hum of his own machinery. Then he thought of his prisoner. Now wouldn't be a half-bad time to do a bit of gloating.

Langley threw open the door of the empty cell, then peered through the windows. "Didn't suppose any man would have nerve enough to go down into that water," he commented. "Cavanaugh's a

bigger fool than I thought."

One of his launches was just docking as he stepped outside to look into the water beneath the window. Langley eyed the occupant curiously. "What happened to you? I didn't know you got mixed up in the big scrap. We left you behind."

"I know you did, but last night I was overhauling my launch when who should come out of the water from under the dock but Cavanaugh. He climbed aboard, and we had a row—damned near killed me. Made me take him back to the Sunset, and sent word back that he had a machine-gun mounted on one of his boats. Said that if any of our men mixed into their affairs, he'd let 'em have it."

"He did, eh? Very well; better get that eye of yours fixed up. It's looking bad.

Is your nose broken?"

"Feels like it, but I don't think it is. I'll have the eye attended to," replied the battered individual with the mark of Cavanaugh on his brow.

Langley was thoughtful for several minutes. He still had a number of good cards to play—Benedict, and the court orders. He hardly believed Cavanaugh would dare

defy an injunction.

Upon Single's return to the Sunset he was amazed to find everything running as usual. Marks of the battle were evident everywhere, but the men were carrying on. He knew Cavanaugh was a prisoner and concluded that Edna had taken charge. Mrs. Lockwood greeted him anxiously. "Any news of Edna, Mr. Benedict?"

"Didn't know she was missing," he replied. "I was a prisoner of war myself in the enemy's hands, but got out of it none the worse. What happened to

Edna?"

"Missing! So is Manning!"

"I'll be hanged! Who started things going?"

"I did!"

Single was hanged again. He hadn't expected it of a woman. And the cannery was running at top speed, too.

"Any news of Cavanaugh? I heard he

was knocked overboard."

"He was, but is being held by Langley, I understand. I didn't see him myself. They did not regard me as an important

prisoner," he added.

Single took charge of affairs, until Cavanaugh put in an appearance. He came up the gangway hurriedly after giving the launch operator the message to carry to Langley.

"Was Edna hurt in the fight?" was his

first query.

"Edna and Manning are missing!" Mrs. Lockwood was keeping her courage well, but beneath her calm exterior Cavanaugh saw the woman was nearly frantic.

"You keep things moving, Benedict," he ordered. "The run is at its height. I'm going to look for Edna, and when I find her I'll come back. Pack up some grub while I change into dry togs. I've been wet for hours."

As if he had not been burdened with enough trouble for one day, just then Mrs. Lockwood entered the cabin. "We've "I don't been robbed," she announced. know when or how, but the certified copies

of Edna's permits are missing."

Cavanaugh groaned. "Edna's not careless with anything. She did not mislay them, you can depend on that. I'm beginning to understand the code message we picked up from the Kalla station addressed to Judson Wallace, Seward. He's their counsel, you know. They're going to serve an injunction now that they've found they can't run us out. It'll stand until the commissioner arrives. Perhaps longer if we can't furnish documentary evidence, and I imagine our evidence has reached Langley by this time. You tell Dan, alias Single Benedict, I want to see him, please. Thanks!" And while waiting for Benedict to appear, Cavanaugh changed his clothing. When Single arrived, Cavanaugh got to the point at once.

"Langley may try to enjoin us. Ignore it, understand, ignore it. I'll take the penalty for contempt of court, but we're not going to lose on our pack. I'm holding you responsible while I'm gone, Single."

For the first time since he had come aboard, Single showed resentment. "You don't need to look at me, or talk to me like that, Cavanaugh. I'm not afraid of you or any other man."

"That's true, no doubt, but I wanted to make my orders distinct, plain and brief. No offense intended." Single stalked out

frowning.

"I'll be back when you see me, Mrs. Lockwood," Cavanaugh informed her a few minutes later as he went over the side. "Don't worry about Edna. She can hold her own anywhere. Remember as between a woman's wit and a man's brute strength, bank on the woman every time." Fine words, and the way Cavanaugh put them made them seem real enough, but inwardly he felt differently about it. anything happens to Edna, I'm going to take it out of this mysterious Carter Turner's hide. He discovered his mistake too late to suit me."

CHAPTER IX

BIRDS OF A FEATHER

MANGLEY found a man waiting for him in his office two days after the battle between the rival fleets of gill netters. They measured glances carefully, and Langley spoke first. "You wish to see me?"

"I don't know whether I wish to see you or not, but I'm going to find out soon " My

name's Manning. I'm-"

Langley interrupted with a sneer. "You're the fellow the company planted aboard the Sunset to do a little job or two, and at the same time to keep tab on me."

"Maybe I am, and maybe I ain't. Anyway, the company seems to know you were double-crossing them. Trying to get a personal control of the *Sunset* through Benedict, and at the same time do it with

their money."

Langley flushed. The man had hit him hard, and he knew it. "Well, what's your plan? Let's hear it. I'm beginning to see a light myself. I'd say, offhand, you threw the monkey wrench in the Sunset's machinery off Unimak Pass. Another guess would be that Ah Goon chanced by with his pies when you did it, or had the goods on you some way and you silenced him ef-

fectively."

"If you're through your guessing, I'll do a little myself. I'll start by saying anything I do, I do effectively, and that includes anybody that double-crosses me. I know a number of things. One of 'em is this. If the Sunset fails to make her pack of Reds they're going broke, and you figure to pick 'em up at a bargain and chuck your own company overboard. That's a good idea, but they're packing day and night, just the same, and the run's half over. You're losing. I saw a strange gas boat coming in. I'd say old Wallace was aboard. That means an injunction and the usual stuff-delays, delays, delays, and going broke for the Cavanaugh crowd. But you've overlooked one thing, or maybe you haven't. Suppose they've got their permits and papers along? Bang goes your injunction if the Cavanaugh crowd put up a fight. And you ought to know they'll fight, considering what I saw the other

"I told Benedict to get those papers, if

they had any!" countered Langley.

"Yep, but you told him too late. I got 'em. Now suppose they don't have the papers, what's the matter with bringing in Edna Geary? She can tell a mighty straight story, and has a lot of looks to go with it. The commissioner's a square old cuss, and a straight story, told by a pretty girl, is going to make more of a hit than a lot of high sounding words from Wallace. These Alaska commissioners are from the old, square deal school. They don't care much about what some judge done a hundred years ago; they do what they think's right. What would it be worth to you to have the copies of the permit?"

"You have them?"

"I've got them, and I've got the girl out of the way. Never mind how I got 'em. What's it worth to have 'em stay out of the way? If it's worth enough I'll hand the papers over to you now, and leave the dame where she is. Then I'll 'strike across the Peninsula and catch a mail boat or schooner out of the Cold Bay country. If it ain't worth a cent, I'll go back and get the Geary girl and turn her loose."

"If you don't get her, would shewould she-die?" queried Langley. He knew he faced a ruthless man, and the

thought frightened him.

"Well, there wasn't any grub there, and she can't get out. She's got a raw salmon to tide her over a while."

THE cold-bloodedness of it all left Langley silent for a moment—not that he had any tenderness in his own heart. "I'll give you five hundred dollars for the permit," he said at last, "and just forget about where you left the girl!"

"Car-fare!" sneered Manning. "Talk

ousiness!'

"What's your price?"

"A couple of thousand dollars!" Manning eyed the other coldly. "It's worth it to you. It's worth it to your company,

either way you put it."

They haggled for a half-hour, and compromised on twelve hundred dollars. It hurt Langley to count out the bills, for it was his own money he was paying—not the company's. Manning counted them over again, then handed Langley the certified and photographic copies of the permit granted to Edna.

"And see to it that girl don't come showing up here the wrong time, Manning, or else you'll find yourself in a mess. I've paid for results, and I'm counting on getting them," said Langley by way of warn-

ing

"Don't worry about the girl; she's salted down for a good long time," assured Manning. Nevertheless he decided to return to the vicinity of the island, and keep an eye on things. For this purpose Langley loaned him an outboard motor to fit to his dory. He also supplied him with provisions. Then Langley turned to problems nearer at hand. He called in his foreman.

"How about it; have we received any fish from the Sunset fishermen yet? I told Single to slow up things at the Sun-

set and shoot the excess fish to our plant."

"We haven't received a fish from Single, and what's more the floating cannery is going full blast. I've had a scout or two out, and we've a fair idea of the catches they've been making," answered the man.

"Cavanaugh is on the job again, you

know!" said Langley.

"No, he isn't. Do you expect that fellow to be hanging around the ship when Edna Geary is missing? Benedict is run-

ning things full blast!"

Langley whistled in blank amazement. "Get me my motor boat immediately," he directed. Could it be possible that in some way Single Benedict had fallen down? It was the last thing in the world he had expected, and if such was the case, or he had been bought off, then it was serious. But he still had his injunction.

Langley was going into the lion's den perhaps, but he prepared for it by donning his United States marshal's shield. There was a deal of comfort in having

Uncle Sam back of him.

Things were humming when he came up alongside the *Sunset*. He mounted the gangway and looked around.

SINGLE greeted him pleasantly. "Hello, Langley, what's up?"

"Why aren't you sending fish my way? Cavanaugh is not here, and you're in charge."

Mrs. Lockwood, standing nearby, pricked up her ears and listened for the reply. Langley's blunt words were the most amazing things she had heard in some time. Was it possible that Benedict——?

"Yeah, I'm running things, Langley, and every damned fish we get is going into our cans. You might as well find that out now as later," replied Single.

"I might as well—what?" faltered Langley, dumbfounded. "Why, you're our man—you're a damned crook!"

"Hold on there! I was your man. I plugged along with your company for several years, and I gave you honest service for my pay. You never asked me to do any crooked work until you heard Cavanaugh was coming up with a floating cannery. Then you asked me to invest, stating it would be a good thing. I already knew it would be a good thing, and had intended to invest."

"But some of my money, a lot of it, went into this," shouted Langley. "I'm a stockholder. I've got a written court order here, as stockholder, to take charge of affairs in the absence of the majority stockholders. Cavanaugh and Miss Geary are away, and I've a right to protect my interests." He thrust the court order at Single. "Now what do you think of that?"

"I'll tell you what I think of it, Langley—this!" Benedict crumpled the paper up and tossed it overboard. "You're not a stockholder, Langley, you merely advanced me money to invest. You were afraid to trust me outright, or to come into the open, so you very carefully took my note, my personal note, which bears interest at seven per cent, and is not due for several months yet. In return I gave you my stock as security. The stock becomes yours when I default on that note, and not before."

"You knew my game and-"

"Exactly, and that's why I took the course I did. Nobody ever accused Single Benedict of matrimony or crookedness. You made the mistake of believing I was crooked merely because I worked for you. Well, charge it up to experience." Single Benedict tucked his thumbs into the armholes of his vest, and waited for Langley to do something.

Now that he had partially recovered from the blow, Langley was ready to do something. He fished in his pocket and brought out the injunction, and figuratively Single Benedict decided to beat him to the draw. He did not give the other a chance to read the order, but caught him by the arm and started him down the gangway. "Get off this ship, Langley; you're not a stockholder, you're not a guest, so you're where you don't belong. Hurry."

Langley swung suddenly and caught Single in the stomach with his elbow. Single grunted and swayed. With a vicious leap, Langley hit Single's chest with his shoulder, and the impact forced him through the gangway hand ropes. Benedict fought furiously as he slipped through, and dangled in mid-air, his hands clinging to the steps. Langley's toe came swiftly against the hanging man's fingers and he plunged into the icy bay. There was only one person to aid him—a woman. He came up spluttering. "Minerva!" he bellowed.

Mrs. Lockwood caught up a life belt with rope attached and rushed to the rail. "Coming, Single!" she answered.

CHAPTER X

ON EDNA'S ISLAND

HEN the tide came in and the chill waters of the Bering Sea trickled through the cracks about the cabin door, Edna Geary experienced a brief instant of terror, then it was gone. She could see the water would climb so high and no higher. She was safe enough, though it was wet underfoot.

However, she was not one to sit with folded hands and wait for something to happen. Manning had caught her completely off her guard, or else she would not have been here in the first place. She knew she was no match for him in physical strength, and so all along she had remained passive, intending to grasp the first opportunity to turn the tables and escape. Manning had not permitted that opportunity. She tried the door, knowing well enough that it would not give, then she eyed the portholes, which gave on the deck. Except where one was broken, the heavy glass kept out the rain and air and the spray of any chance wave that might break over the Edna opened one of them, and measured the brass work. No chance to She had squeeze through that, unlessonce seen a man go into a steam boiler through what seemed to her an impossibly small hole when compared with the man's breadth of shoulders. He had gone in, nevertheless, until only his feet remained outside, had done his work and come out again. Imprisonment was unbearable, and so she did a startling thing. She removed her outer clothing and thrust it through the opening. Then she herself followed, right arm and head together, squirming, twisting by degrees until she had forced the other shoulder and arm through. It was desperately cold, but the violence of her efforts not only bruised the tender flesh, but stirred her circulation as well. It hurt, every bit of the way, but once started there was no stopping. Finally she half-slid, half-fell to the deck, and crouched there, dressing hurriedly. Then she opened the door to give the impression that she had broken out that way in case Manning

should return—and she knew he would return sooner or later.

She rummaged about the wreck, found several articles of interest, and finally unearthed some canned goods, rather ancient. She built a fire, cooked some corned beeftaking a chance on ptomaine poisoning -and consumed it. Thus fortified and feeling a new strength and independence in the warmth of the food, she found a way to the top of the island. There were not many, for the walls were abrupt. She found fresh water in several little grassy depressions, and a tiny stream dribbled down at one spot. A trap made a fair shelter when properly anchored down with stones, but it was in the open, and she was seeking a place that Manning could not enter without a fight-a fight that would take place in a position in her favor. None such seemed evident on the flattish top of the island.

Every move of the girl was thoughtful and logical, based on her belief that someone would be seeking her soon. She had an idea that that someone would be Hayden Cavanaugh. "It's too bad Marie Heath is not here," she said suddenly. "It would add a touch of the romantic to the rescue." She was thoughtful for several moments, heedless of the Bering Sea wind that whipped about her. "I'm glad she's not," she suddenly declared. "I'm glad it's Edna Geary, even if it is going to hurt a little in the end. I wonder what Marie would have done under the circumstances?"

A night on the island, a wild brief night with drenching rain and howling wind while the sea thundered beneath the cliff, then dawn. She was up at four o'clock, laboring to get a tar barrel she had found to the top of the cliff. Then she carried wood, stacking it until there was quite a pile. Nothing like a tar barrel to make smoke, and that was what she wanted, but she waited until the sun broke through the clouds and the air was right. The blaze licked the damp wood without enthusiasm, but at length the pile flared up, sending a column of black smoke high in the air. She cooked a meal in the ashes, heated some hot water and bathed. "One might think I was expecting a caller; well, I am -perhaps several. I do hope that Manning and Hayden don't arrive at the same time.'

It was two hours before the expected caller came in sight. There appeared, not a boat, but a long, narrow object, awash most of the time. The paddle amidships dropped alternately on the port and starboard side; the lone occupant sitting upright, seemingly a part of the craft. "A bidarka!" she exclaimed, and rushed to the topmost cliff and waved her arms to attract attention. Apparently the native had seen her already, for he waved his paddle, then continued.

To an inexperienced person the frail craft offered small hope of escape, but Edna's keen eye had already discerned a second hatch in the bidarka. The least she could expect would be a precarious trip from the island to mainland, and perhaps eventual transportation back to Kalla Bay.

So interested was she in the native's progress that she did not see a second craft swing around the point close inshore. The report of a rifle sounded above the steady roar of breaking waves against the cliffs, and a jet of water spurted up near the bidarka. The native turned his craft swiftly and fled, but he was not to escape the lone occupant of the power boat. The latest arrival stood up and emptied his rifle, then filled the magazine and continued, gradually timing the interval as the native craft reached a crest and vanished in the hollow between waves. One shot was not followed by a jet of white water. The paddle slipped from the native's hands, and he tore at his breast frantically. Suddenly his craft turned over, bottom up, floating slowly as if held by a weight beneath; then suddenly it bobbed lightly on the waves as if freed.

DNA watched the drama half-fascinated, hardly believing her senses. The motor boat was now swinging in toward the reef, the outboard motor humming merrily. Edna did not need a closer view to recognize the figure. The coldblooded efficiency with which he disposed of the native informed her it was Manning. By that shot he had not only effectively prevented Edna's immediate rescue, but insured lasting silence. She turned, seeking means of defence. He could not hope to climb that cliff if her supply of rocks held out, unless he attempted it at night. shuddered at the thought of his gaining the top.

And then another figure emerged from the cliffs on the opposite side, dripping with sea water, carrying his left arm queerly—

"Quick, Hayden," Edna cried, "he's

coming up the rocks on the opposite side.

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Cavanaugh felt for his automatic pistol. The holster was empty. "Lost that, too Edna," he panted. "Saw your fire and figured it was you. Was working along the mainland shore for signs of you, and doubled back when your smoke loomed up Lost my boat in the surf trying to get over the reef." He must have had a struggle for his face was white in contrast to his usual rugged tan.

Hayden hurried to the cliff and crouched behind a shoulder of rocks close to the path Manning must take. He could see the man now, working up a few feet at a time, frequently glancing upward, automatic pistol in hand. A good sized boulder would have turned the trick and effectively disposed of the problem, but the method seemed cowardly and cold-blooded to Cavanaugh. At his order, Edna had taken a position some distance away out of danger.

Manning gained the top, and glanced around, then his face lighted as he saw Edna. "You've stirred up a hell of a mess," he snarled. "I'll make sure of you this time."

An arm closed around his throat from behind, crooked like some muscular vise, and silenced him. Surprised, the man recovered, tearing at the arm with fury. Cavanaugh held him, while his own teeth set in pain. Manning flung himself toward the cliff, working nearer and nearer by degrees

"Hayden! Hayden! Let go!" Edna was running toward them now, frightened at Manning's tactics, and unwittingly playing into his hands. Cavanaugh would let go, he reasoned, if he got close enough to the edge. His strength was ebbing fast from lack of air. With a last mad plunge Manning flung himself free—free from the terror of that encompassing arm, free from the cliff, of life itself.

"Go back, Edna!" Cavanaugh panted. "Don't look down there."

"Hayden, what's the matter? You look like a ghost!" she cried, alarmed at his color.

"Take hold of my arm, the left one. That's it. Now twist as I tell you," he directed. She obeyed him reluctantly, knowing she was hurting him. "Harder! Harder!" he gasped, while the perspiration stood out on his face from the agony. Something snapped, a sickening sound, and he sat down weakly. "The boat turned

over on me in the surf, and I dislocated my shoulder. Couldn't explain it because you said Manning was coming. That was the only way I could get him. If he'd quit instead of trying to kill us both, I'd have had a prisoner in my hands. I need him, for several reasons. I'm going down below!"

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Manning was alive, but going fast. His eyes burned furiously as he saw Cavanaugh bending over him. "Anything I can do, Manning, to make things easier? Any message?" Cavanaugh straightened the dying man out and eased his position.

"Go to hell, Cavanaugh! I should have killed the dame. That's what happens when you're tender hearted. I'd have been free to spend the money. Reach in and get it—my money!" Gently Cavanaugh removed the roll of bills. Manning clutched them; then, as a wave surged in, with a last effort he hurled the roll into the sea. It vanished in the crest of the backwash. "Nobody can spend my money!" he panted. He lapsed into momentary unconsciousness, then rallied. "I want to get Langley. That's Langley's money I threw away. He paid it to me. Hunt up Bong Yip at the cannery. Make him talk. Make him!"

It is a legal rule that a death bed confession is good evidence and worthy of belief, the theory being that even the worst of men are sobered by the approach of death and want to cross the divide into the unknown-clean. It came upon Manning suddenly; hate died from his eyes and an eager light came. "I'm going this time. Luck's deserted me. Kalla Packing never fails to wipe out competition. They counted on Langley, but wasn't sure. So they hired me. I tried to wreck the Sunset off Unimak, and the Chink found it out. I knifed him at your door. S'long, Cavanaugh." The effort to get the last few words out was too much. Manning collapsed.

"Who's Carter Turner?" Cavanaugh spoke slowly, distinctly, then repeated.

"Who's Carter Turner?"

"A damned fool!" Manning gasped, and died.

AVANAUGH remained by the body a half-hour to assure himself the man was really dead, then he and Edna, between them, buried the body. He had managed to wrap Manning in a section of canvas before she came down, however.

With this duty performed, they set about seeking means of escape. Manning's dory had been smashed while he was climbing the cliff—due to his carelessness in making it secure. It was beyond hope of repair.

Edna pointed to the bidarka, bobbing about the lagoon, half-afloat. "I'm going

to get it!" she declared.

Cavanaugh shook his head. "The water is too cold. Wait; perhaps tomorrow I can make it out there, if my arm isn't too stiff."

She shook her head as vigorously as he had done. "We can't wait. It seems in good condition, now. If we delay it may be smashed, and with it our last hope of escape until something else comes along."

"But I can't paddle one of the things. They're tricky as the deuce to a novice. It requires unusual skill and lots of practice,"

he protested.

"I have some skill and lots of practice. It was the only way I occupied my time last summer. Go up and stir up the fire.

I'll salvage the bidarka."

She shoved a plank into the lagoon, seated herself on it and commenced to paddle out, using a board. He waited until assured she was in no danger of slipping off, then climbed the cliff and dragged several chunks of wood onto the fire. It was blazing brightly when she joined him. She was wet to the waist, but the bidarka lay above high water mark on a bit of beach in good condition. As they dried out they discussed the situation. Several miles of water lay between them and the mainland.

"I've paddled that far alone, Hayden, but not with two. The peculiar way of sitting cramps the legs, and a white person can not stand much of it, but I know I

can make it."

"You're boss in this instance. I don't know a blamed thing about them, but I've confidence in your judgment. It is essential that we reach the *Sunset* as soon as possible. Somehow I've always felt Benedict was right deep down despite his associations, but we can't go too much on that. He's in command. And there is no telling what Langley will do. He paid Manning to keep you away. That suggests that you should be there. Perhaps he's ready with his injunction."

"Then let's chance the bidarka!"

"I'm on!"

From the cliffs she mapped out a course through the reef. The tide would soon be high, and there was less white water and fewer black rocks with cruel fangs waiting just below the surface. They took several cans of the corned beef as an emergency ration, then made their way to the frail skin craft.

"Hayden," she said seriously, "you have got to trust a woman as you never have

trusted before."

A bitter smile flashed across his face, but she did not notice it. "I'm willing-when I can pick my woman. What's the order, Skipper? I'm passenger this time."

"You're worse than that, Hayden, you're ballast. We'll get it into the water first, and I'll steady it while you crawl through the hatch. I'm afraid to attempt it with you sitting up, you're so big and heavy. You must crawl down until you're out of sight, squirming as best you can, then I'll cover the hatch. Then pray, and I'll paddle. If the thing turns over I think I can right it—I've done it twice alone."

Cavanaugh squeezed his bulk through the hatch until his face was staring through it at the sky. He felt as if he were in his coffin. Perhaps he was. Certainly if the thing capsized he would be drowned long before he could squirm out. He was relying entirely on Edna's coolness and judgment. Well, he had relied on that before,

and not found her wanting.

Edna smiled, a very serious, thoughtful smile as she covered the hatch with canvas and secured it. Now that the moment was at hand, she dreaded it. Then she took her own seat and shoved off, gliding smoothly across the lagoon, then into the surging sea and white water of the reef.

Cavanaugh's muffled voice came to her from below. "The ballast is riding fine,

Tust the same the air was getting foul, and they were barely under way. Cavanaugh wondered just how much of a warning one received before one actually smothered.

CHAPTER XI

ENJOINED

INERVA LOCKWOOD'S quick response perhaps did not save Single Benedict's life, but he firmly believed it did. The life belt plunged into the water beside him, and he grasped it. She towed him to the gangway, where Langley awaited with a pair of handcuffs.

Seeing the man was ready to renew t smo fight, Langley called two of his men fro can the launch, and Benedict did not have bee He was ironed and dump aide unceremoniously into the craft. "Don pra worry, Dan," Mrs. Lockwood called. "I

keep things going here."

"You will, eh?" sneered Langle "That's contempt of court, too. Con along!" He hustled the startled matro down the gangway and seated her besid the dripping Benedict. "Now if there ar any more of you who think they're bigge than the United States of America, jus ignore that injunction and see just how big you really are." He glanced around Several Chinamen were peering down and a few of the whites. The fishermen were in their boats for the most part. Langle left a copy of the injunction posted where all could see when they returned. He also passed the word that while they were en joined from operating the Sunset it was not necessary to let the fish spoil, and the Kalla Packing Company would be good enough to take the different catches at the usual figure. Then he headed for the can-

The hum of machinery in the Sunset ceased, and for the first time since the Red run began she was silent. Uncertainty ruled for an hour or so, then the men gathered in knots and the inevitable "game" started. Down in the Chinese quarters they played games of their own. Like the whites, they were putting in time until

something happened.

At his cannery Langley waited for the Sunset fishermen to appear with laden boats, but none came. "Let 'em keep their fish, if they want to," he growled. "They've quit, and we're getting more for a change. I'm satisfied."

This state of affairs continued for two days, then a bidarka rounded the point, close inshore, and came slowly down the bay. The crew of the Sunset gathered at the rail and watched its progress. A sud-

den cheer from the American Legion men.

"Good girl!" yelled a voice.

The good girl smiled, but did not relax her caution. Eager hands grasped and steadied the raft as she squirmed out. Then the other hatch stirred slightly, lifted and Cavanaugh's perspiring and unshaved face peered forth.

"Thank God!" he exclaimed, and he "Ive blamed near meant it literally.

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as

w t smothered. We've been at this two days, n fro camping and resting and eating corned have beef." The unusual treatment had not imp aided his arm. It was helpless for all practical purposes, though not quite as sore as the day it was dislocated. Cavanaugh noticed the silence. "Why aren't you packing? Where's Benedict?"

"We're enjoined, sir!" answered the "Benedict and Mrs. Lockwood were arrested for contempt of court, but it looked to me more like contempt of

Langley."

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"Langley?" "Yes, wearing a marshal's shield and

the authority behind it."

"All right, let's see how much authority he really has. You men set out at once. Don't say anything about my return, men. We'll see what happens, but if he or his men attempt to interfere just tell them you are ordered to go to work. I'll take all responsibility." All they needed was leadership and they were willing to do the rest. "I am a law-abiding citizen, Edna, but I'm not going to obey that injunction, because it's an unfair move."

"It may mean imprisonment," warned him.

"I can serve time in jail with the utmost cheerfulness if I know the holds of the Sunset are filled with packed Reds. You're a brick, Edna, the way you handled that bidarka. Several times I knew you were having your troubles-could tell it by the motion of the craft—but you pulled through. Getting back here is entirely due to your efforts." His admiration was sin-They had been through a lot together during the last few days, and as a result had unconsciously been brought closer than years of casual acquaintanceship would have done. Development of team work, respect for one another's ability would do much for their future as business associates, if nothing more.

HE news of the return of the Sunset's fishermen to the scene of the red hordes was quickly sent to Langley. It could mean but one thing. Cavanaugh was back. He delayed a day before acting, nowever, for he had learned by radio that a Coast Guard cutter was expected. was considerably more authority in a cutter and a greater sense of security than in the deputy marshal's shield that he wore.

The cutter slipped quietly into the bay on

the second day following Cavanaugh's return. Langley did not wait for her to drop anchor, but hurried away in his launch to the Sunset. He was prepared to start something now. He only hoped that Cavanaugh would start something. Three husky citizens of doubtful repute accompanied him as a guard. They were all armed.

Cavanaugh saw them coming. "You are supposed to be in Manning's hands, Edna," he said, "so keep out of sight!" The girl nodded, but watched the affair from her window.

Langley stalked aboard, a self-confident individual with drawn weapon and gleaming shield. "Who ordered these men to work?" he demanded.

"I did!"

"Didn't you see that notice posted over

"Yep! But Reds are running, Langley. and when Reds run you can't pay much attention to notices." Cavanaugh's suggestion of a smile vanished. "What are you going to do about it? I see you waited until a Coast Guard cutter dropped in."

"I'm going to arrest you for contempt of court. I'm going to do more; I'm going to arrest every man aboard this ship on the same charge. The commissioner is aboard the cutter, and Wallace is arranging for a hearing a week from today."

'And we're tied up in the meantime. All right, Jack!" Cavanaugh's voice was raised slightly. "Let him have it!" At the same instant Cavanaugh leaped behind a door. From a place of concealment a jet of sea water shot, backed by all the force the pumps could get on one nozzle. It caught Langley square in the stomach and he collapsed with a grunt; it sluiced his automatic down the deck and overboard: then it aided Langley's men in their mad rush down the gangway, and all but swamped their craft. Two men rushed out and caught Langley as he regained his feet.

"Somebody's going to pay and pay like hell for this!" he shouted. The chill of

the water left him chattering.

"A number of us have been drenched on account of you, and we gave you a taste of your own medicine, Langley. Besides, it was one way of disarming you and your men without bloodshed. You're to remain aboard a prisoner until I see fit to turn you over to the Coast Guard cutter. Miss Geary, step here, please!"

Edna stepped into view.

"Edna!" exclaimed Langley, and his face told more than any words that might have slipped through his closely guarded lips. "Manning double-crossed me!"

"Manning is dead, Langley, but before he died he told many things, many things that I listened to, and the most important of which Miss Geary heard-words he saw fit to utter when he knew he was dying. That's why I have taken it upon myself to

make you prisoner."

Cavanaugh said no more. He realized the uncertainty would break the other down. There had been much in Langley's life that would not stand the test of a jury trial. How much had Manning found out; how much proof had he; how much had he told? In the grip of two deck hands Langley was led below. Slowly defiance of the other returned.

"I'll tell you one thing, Cavanaugh you think you've got me. Maybe you have, maybe you haven't. But you've lost the thing you were striving for most. You lost your girl back in Seattle, and I broke it on you just enough to spoil your pack by several thousand cases. You don't believe it, but the run's about over. It's a short run, and only those who've money behind can pull through. Wait until Carter Turner starts in-wait!"

"Who's Carter Turner?"

"Judge Keene's confidential man. judge got fat off your father, and now he's fattening off you. Cheerful news, isn't it, but I've known it right along. It's been a three-cornered fight between Keene, Kalla Packing and Cavanaugh-Geary. The dark horse won. He sent Manning aboard, then found Manning wanted to job him and ordered his discharge. He was playing the game I tried to play, and come mighty near getting away with it. Now think of that, and maybe you won't think so much about me."

"I'll think of that in due time, Langley, but right now I'm going ashore and get acquainted with Bong Yip—he'll talk, according to Manning."

The effect of his words and the Chinaman's name was startling. Defiance vanished and a man stripped of courage cowered before him. Manning, though dead, had gained the revenge he sought-revenge for some affair known perhaps only to the two of them. Perhaps Bong Yip knew?

A ND to Bong Yip Cavanaugh hurried never in his life had Cavanaugh en B countered a man who knew less-appar ently. The Chinese shook his head sol his emnly at direct questions, and cleverly extricated himself from Cavanaugh's verba b traps. Eventually Cavanaugh gave it up for more pressing things of the moment

Mrs. Lockwood was comfortable and indignant. She demanded an instant trial. She wanted to be taken instantly to Langley and confront him in court. Single was uncomfortable and fighting mad He wanted to confront Langley, but not in court, preferably in some quiet alley. The pair felt better when they learned the man was a prisoner aboard the Sunset. On Cavanaugh's rather sharp demand they were released. A surly clerk in the general store gave Cavanaugh a packet of mail the Coast Guard cutter had brought in. It was later by several weeks than anything they had received, having come from Seattle direct.

The four were in the act of boarding the launch when a hearty shout greeted them. "Things sure are happening now," exclaimed Edna. "That's Gibbon, the marshal!"

Cavanaugh had met him once before in another part of Alaska, in addition to a short chat aboard the Sunset soon after arrival. He was accompanied by a negro, obviously a prisoner, but not handcuffed. Gibbon shook hands.

"Had quite a chase for this boy, Cavanaugh, but caught him at last. devil! Not so badly scared now are you, Sam? He's the one who killed the Mexican, Jose, and I'm half-convinced it was some frame-up on Langley's part. going to question him."

"He's a prisoner aboard the Sunset. I was going to turn him over to the Coast Guard, but now you're back you can have

"What charge?"

"Nothing definite that'll stand the test of a trial, but we'll talk it over, pick up some loose ends and go to it. It's a long story, Gibbon, I'll tell you later," answered Cavanaugh.

"I'll be out in the morning. Sam and I have had a tough trip today. Come on, boy, I'll have to lock you up, but I'm believing your story of self-defense, so don't worry. See you in the morning Cavanaugh, when I come for Langley."

"By the way, Gibbon, do you know

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"Sure do. Now don't ask me to make him talk. It can't be done. I've tried He's loyal to Langley, too. Used to be his valet or something in the States."

CHAPTER XII

SOUTHWARD HO!

BOARD the Sunset they were still packing steadily, though Cavanaugh knew the light run was practically Thanks, however, to the location of their site, they would be packing as long as any cannery in the region. He ordered a good meal sent down to his prisoner, then Edna took a seat beside him, and they went through the mail. They took up papers and magazines last.

"Hello, what's this? Somebody's mailed me a paper. Would you mind opening it, Edna. The shoulder won't stand long swings such as opening newspaper pages."

She spread the paper, a Sunday edition, out flat and turned page after page, scanning the headlines closely. "False alarm, I guess," she said. "We're down to classified, auto section, society and sports."

The first page of the society section stared up at them; a full-page photograph of a beautiful woman-except for the weakness

about the mouth.

"Oh!" A soft exclamation escaped Edna. To herself she whispered, "My poor boy! After all he has gone through, and now this!" She heard him read slowly, "Mrs. Ramos Walsh, nee Marie Heath, a recent bride."

Edna started to leave, for in this moment he would wish to be alone. Cavanaugh's hand caught hers and drew her back. "Old dad knew better than I," he said aloud. "Well, Marie, may all the good fortune and happiness be yours; and that comes right from the heart of one who once cared a lot

"And you didn't know, Hayden. Is this the way she broke the news to you?"

"Oh, no, she was square enough about it. She sent me word, a letter Langley delivered while I was in jail that time. She did not seem to have much hope of my making a go of this. She predicted a long, uphill struggle and-lack of confidence hurt more than anything else. I can stand the thought that she was the reason I was left out of the will except for the ship. is all right, too, for it put me to a test I rather welcomed. In a way we've made good together, Edna, but the future is in the laps of the gods. It's in old Carter Turner's power to put us out of business when we return, unless we have the cash to meet his note. That's Judge Keene's game, working through him."

They were silent, thinking of the struggles they had gone through together; each with full confidence in the other. It suddenly occurred to Cavanaugh that it would seem strange not to have Edna near him when problems came up in the future. His feeling toward her lacked the mad fascination he had had for Marie. It was deeper, finer, a beautiful thing even amid the properties of such a stage as a cannery vessel. His heart ruled him now, absolutely.

"Edna!"

She seemed startled at his tone, and a shyness gripped her. The grip on her hand that he had retained since stopping her became firmer, gentler. "Yes, Hayden!" she whispered, for her mind had been traveling with his over the exciting days of the past two weeks.

"Let's go ahead with this thing together -life itself, I mean, not merely this, the first incident of our life. It mustn't stop here; if-if you can care for me-a little.

A twinge in his shoulder prevented the use of his left arm in a situation that properly requires the use of both. They were smiling into each other's eyes as they had smiled many times during the past few weeks, but this time it was over a personal problem they alone had solved.

Mrs. Lockwood entered, gasped and backed out. "What's the meaning of that?" she exclaimed. "Why, what'll Marie Heath say? Edna, how could she, and right under my eyes, too, and I never suspected."

"It means," replied Single, "that I knew what I was talking about when I said women usually come north single and go back married. I don't say they come North for husbands, though it does seem to meyes, back in their minds that's what they come for." Single was getting harsh once more. Mrs. Lockwood leaped to the defense of her sex, and thereby committed a tactical blunder.

"Where's the husband you were going to get me, Single?" she demanded. "I didn't come up here for one, but if I had-well.

you failed miserably, and you've mighty little time left to get him."

"I'm not going to get him, Minerva," he said in a voice he himself did not recognize. "I'm going to take you myself!" He was amazed at his courage, and so was she. She was even more amazed when he gathered her into his arms, and so was he.

"Oh, Single," she gasped, "I must have

time to think!"

He pressed the pursuit feverishly, so gol darned happy he felt like cheering! "Don't think, Minerva, don't—you might not have me!"

She gave up the struggle. "I won't, Single!"

"Won't have me!" he cried.

"Won't think!" she whispered. He felt capable of tackling the world singlehanded. It was incredible that such an ordinary thing as a woman could mean so much to a man. Why, there were millions of them about, and he had never discovered it before.

The softness of night belongs to lovers and twilight was late, but they strolled on deck until Cavanaugh found a bench and lugged up with his good arm. Then the four sat beneath the stars and mutually con-

fessed.

In his cell below decks Langley took on renewed hope. As Cavanaugh had done on a similar occasion, he stared at the bars of his cell door speculatively. He rummaged about his bunk for something in the nature of a lever, for he had much to gain by trying, and nothing to lose. A hack saw and blades tumbled out. His astonishment was momentary, and followed by caution. Someone, Manning perhaps, with a view to possible imprisonment in that same cell, had prepared for escape by secreting the saw and blades. Langley lost no time, but fell to work, knowing his time was limited. When he had severed three of the bars he left them in place, and lay down on the bunk to await darkness. "Bong Yip's got to die," he muttered, "and I got to cover up my tracks some way. Then I got to get down to that island. They buried Manning's body there, and it must have the money on it, yet. After that-

ANGLEY squirmed through the cell door; a desperate man who thought only of freedom, ready to kill to gain it. His hand gripped a spanner he had picked up some distance from the door. In the darkness he slunk on deck, peering around

swiftly. At the port gangway the bidarkation rode lightly on the water—inviting him text enter and flee with no more sound that

the light dipping of paddle.

He had been in one of the skin craft once her before, the bay was calm and the shoreder not far away. He cast off, his hand leav ing the gangway reluctantly. Then into no the night. In the distance the drumming of a motor boat came across the waters an She was moving swiftly toward the Sunset The man in the bidarka paddled furiously The moon drifted lazily from behind a cloud and flooded the waters with the silvery the light of mystery, outlining the oncoming case launch and the black skin craft. The launch thundered by, leaving a curling wake astern that spread fanlike toward the bidarka and sm the open bay. The skin craft rolled vio- as lently, then capsized. he

"What's that weird cry?" Edna's voice was hushed. The men leaped to their feet. wi Cavanaugh caught sight of the bidarka, and prosaw the water churn amidships frantically up as something beneath fought to right it. he Once, twice, thrice a hand broke the surface, then the craft remained still, drifting, bot-

tom up.

Cavanaugh and Benedict in a dory arrived almost as soon as the launch. They righted the bidarka and pulled a sodden

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body aboard.

"Langley!" exclaimed Gibbon. "I was coming to get him; afraid he might have friends aboard the *Sunset* and make his escape. If we had a pulmotor at the cannery we might revive him. Several have suggested it, but he refused to spend the money. Better come along. I'm curious to know the effect this will have on Bong Yip!"

Gibbon led the Oriental into the room where Langley lay. Horror leaped into Vip's eyes, then relief, and he broke into a torrent of dialect, once advancing toward

the body threateningly.

"What does he say?" inquired Gibbon of another Chinaman who spoke good Eng-

"He says a very bad man has come to his end. Langley killed Indian girl on tundra two years ago, and Yip saw him. He's threatened to kill him ever since. Langley told José to kill Sam, but Yip saw it, and Sam killed José and Langley watched."

"That confirms Sam's story!" said Gib-

on.

"How about Manning? Why did he hate Langley?" inquired Cavanaugh. The quesdarkition was repeated, and followed by a long

im texplanation.

than "Langley marry Manning's sister; she get bad lungs up here; Langley wouldn't send onceher out until too late. When pretty near shoredead he send her out on sailboat—too slow leav -she die. Manning very bad man, too, but intenot so bad as Langley."

ming "About a stand off!" said Cavanaugh,

iters and Gibbon confirmed the opinion.

usly SIX weeks later the Sunset left Kodiak loud SIsland astern. In her holds were twelve very thousand cases of Reds and fifteen thousand ning cases of humpies.

"Southward, ho!" cried Cavanaugh gaily. ınch Edna looked up from her books and and smiled. He slipped his arm about her waist vio- as if it belonged there. "How do we stand?"

he queried.

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pice "If we had started out free and clear eet. with all debts paid we could say we had a and profitable season, but as it is-well, it is ally up to Mr. Carter Turner. If he forecloses, it. he'll have to do it, unless you can raise the ce, money elsewhere. If the same old forces ot- line up, and they are likely to when they see a chance to crush us, I'm afraid borrowar- ing will be hard. Perhaps our fight against the Kalla people will have a salutary effect. Who knows? but the main thing is we fought and won our first battle."

"That's the main thing; now for old Judge Keene, who's back of Turner. That's going to be a different battle. We can't get the cuss into the open and take a shot or punch like we could the others. He sits behind his desk and smiles and gives good advice and keeps out of harm's way. Money and the law of business and finance

does the rest."

To their disgust Carter Turner was on the dock to greet them. "Did Manning do any great damage?" he inquired earnestly.

"Not much, but he's dead, so don't

worry!" replied Cavanaugh dryly.

"I trust the season's pack was sufficient

to pay off the note, sir!'

"We trusted the same thing, but the note

isn't due for a week yet. See you later!" "Judge Keene wishes to see you imme-

diately.

"Tell him I'll be up this afternoon." Then to Edna he added, "Might as well see the old cuss and get it over with. You're coming along, too."

"I'm really sorry about Manning; he came to me highly recommended," and Mr. Carter Turner moved down the dock fussily.

Judge Keene beamed. "I hold a note against you which I expect you to pay promptly, Hayden, as I need the money. I'm also ready to turn the balance of your father's estate over to you!"

"Huh!" gasped Cavanaugh. "Huh?"

"It was always your father's proud boast that he never judged a man or a woman wrongly, but he was scared to death for fear he would. That's why he fixed up the will that way, to give Marie a square deal in case he'd sized her up wrong. ahem-the old gentleman certainly was a judge of human nature. I've ordered the old home fixed up, for I figured you would be needing it, eh? You young rascal!"

"But, Judge, the note you hold against

me, why-?"

"My instructions were not to advance you any money from the estate, but there was nothing in that to prevent me advancing you money on my own account. wanted you to have your chance. Hence Carter Turner."

"Hang it, Judge, I've misjudged you. I thought you were a mortal enemy."

"I know it, and I forgive you. Let that be a lesson, young man, never to jump at conclusions. I won't detain you longer, but tomorrow come in and-"

"Pay that note. You bet I will!"

"When's the wedding? I've decided to kiss the bride."

"There'll be two of 'em to kiss, Judge, and say, you're about the only man in the lot that didn't have a spy planted aboard."

"Yes I did, Hayden, and a good one-Single Benedict."

WE RECOMMEND

THE MARCH ISSUE OF DOUBLE ACTION WESTERN FEATURING

A COMPLETE 75,000 WORD NOVEL

By CLARENCE E. MULFORD

THE WOLF TRAIL



INTO THE FROZEN NORTH THE DESPERATE TRAIL WAS TO LEAD SERGEANT KEANE OF THE MOUNTED; INTO A NORTH MORE PERILOUS THAN THAT SEASONED MANTRACKER HAD EVER BEFORE KNOWN, AND WHEN HE REACHED THE LAST DESOLATE OUTPOST OF THE LARUE GANG, HE FOUND THAT THE TREACHEROUS MUSKEG HID A SECRET FAR BEYOND EVEN HIS IMAGININGS AS HE HAD PURSUED HIS DANGER-HAUNTED PATROL.

CHAPTER I

BECAUSE he was now well into La Rue's country, even though La Rue's gang was dispersed, and the famous outlaw himself a prisoner, Sergeant Dan Keane of the Royal Mounted was prudent enough to avoid the smoother surface of the river ice, and broke trail for his dogs

over the higher, open ground. The snow was not yet deep enough for smooth going, here and there a few red leaves still clung to the boughs of the stunted mapleor along the course of the river, and there were still shriveled blueberries upon the bushes. But Sergeant Keane thought too much of the importance of his mission to wish to have his name added to the list of Ke

AN ACTION-PACKED NOVEL by



till those marked "missing," that long and honless able roll of members of the Royal ere Mounted, whose fate is the eternal secret heaf the tundra and the forest.

And this region, twelve days' traveling to from the Mackenzie River station, where of Keane had requisitioned his dogs and sleigh, was distinctly within the territory

of La Rue. The ferocity, cunning and resourcefulness of the leader of the criminal organization that had spread terror through the North was still a legend among the Indians; their hidden cache of plundered fur, estimated to value several hundred thousand dollars, was still undiscovered. And for the sake of Corporal La-

fontaine Dan Keane could afford to take miles by five, lies one of the most desola districts in the world.

He was too expert a man-hunter for that. Divisional headquarters was worried about the non-appearance of Lafontaine with his prisoner. In early summer Lafontaine had got a message through, to the effect that he had trapped Alphonse La Rue at the head of the Little Fish, which runs into the Great Bear north of Lake Ste. Thérèse.

It is a desolate region of marsh and muskeg, known only to the Indians, and probably never yet crossed even by the police on their patrols. But Lafontainelittle Lafontaine, the expert-had cornered La Rue there, arrested him, sent down the news, and-failed to appear.

HEN September came, and there was still no word of Lafontaine and his prisoner at any of the Mackenzie River stations, Keane had been picked to go up and find out what the trouble was. Lafontaine had mentioned scurvy, and the authorities were worried. Keane did not know Lafontaine, who was from another divisional post, but his seven years of service had made him, in the opinion of his superiors, second only to Lafontaine as an expert man-tracker.

And there was a tag to the job that Dan Keane loathed with all his heart. He was under orders to arrest a woman-La Rue's

wife.

The nastiest job that could be given a policeman! But it had to be done, even to the bringing of her in in handcuffs, for Jehane La Rue was wanted as badly as her husband for that matter of the murder of Corporal Anderson two years before. Anderson, too, had cornered La Rue, but Jehane had stolen in and knifed him while he slept, and La Rue had gone at large again.

Dan's one consolation was that, with La Rue and Corporal Lafontaine, the four would form a sort of family party on their way south. Certainly Jehane La Rue would be adequately chaperoned. Nevertheless, this part of his mission quite spoiled Dan's

pleasure in the other part.

From the higher ground on which he was traveling, Dan could see the outlines of Barrier Mountains to the eastward, and the foothills of the Franklin Range to the west. Between these two ranges, covering a territory approximately two hundred

There the drainage from the Great Shared the Great Road hoth increases had and the Great Bear, both immense bodhe of water, held in by the mountain ranged seeps through a ramification of lakes a streams into a vast swamp or muskeg this has never been plumbed. It is the botto of a bowl, thousands of square miles is unfathomable muck that never freez save in the coldest weather; dotted will quickmud, and shunned as a death-trial

As Dan watched, he saw the crests protection of the Franklin disappear. The pale after noon sun vanished behind the clouds ab air the horizon. Across the illimitable distan the bowl toward which Dan had been his scending throughout the day, a uniforot grayness was extending like a moving we

even by the beasts of the tundras.

"Dirty weather," Dan reflected. that will mean plenty of snow, and bet at

he He looked about him to take in t locale. He had left the northern limit of forest well behind, but there was plen of dwarf wood along the course of the rivor parallel to which he had been moving, anit he selected a camping spot about a quarma of a mile ahead, where a patch of will Sti brush would at once furnish him with wone and act as a windbreak.

The storm came up with the usual swimi ness of that latitude. Before Dan h reached the camping-ground that he h selected, the dogs and he were battlihe against a furious gale, sweeping down u checked from the Arctic, and the snostc flakes were already being whirled alowo like leaves before the blasts of autumn. Li

It was with difficulty that Dan was alcle to drive the dogs into the face of the wind, and he was heartily glad of the coparative shelter afforded by the will scrub, a little distance above the river.

He threw their rations of fish to the do and set up the little tent that he have brought with him. He broke ice and draw water from the stream, the snow bei still too light to provide an adequate su, ply, and soon had a fire started with bircha bark and fed with dead willow twigs, and his kettle boiling over it. Bacon and coffeur and sourdough left over from the morniha made a meal fit for a king after the exercivi of the hard day's march. By the tinwi Dan had eaten, night was rushing over the land, to the accompaniment of a blizzath

nat threatened to overturn the little tent Slaven in its shelter of the willows.

Dan lit his pipe and looked out through od Dan lit his pipe and looked out through the open flap, preparatory to seeking the seclusion of his sleeping-bag. This was to this liking, to be the only human in the last solitude, with his dogs snuggling nose ast solitude, with his dogs snuggling nose o nose outside, and the snow pelting down. The was never tired of his own company the wilds. If only his mission did not wimbrace the arrest of Jehane La Rue!
-tr But first there was the matter of finding

Corporal Lafontaine. Dan wrinkled his prows. He had been more perturbed than after acknowledged to himself about Lafonboaine's non-return, for the little corporal was an amous throughout the force for "getting his man" whenever the said man was to be fogot.

Wa It was known that the little Frenchman "had declined a snug billet at Ottawa beet ause he could not give up the appeal of he man-chase.

Dan was conscious of acute anxiety as o what had happened to the little corowed La Rue to get the upper hand of anim. Lafontaine was too experienced a nan-hunter for any such thing as that. Still, his non-return, his silence had been nexplicable. He had had the whole summer in which to cover the two hundred miles between himself and the Mackenzie.

And then there had been that reference the made to scurvy.

Well, Dan must push on as soon as the nostorm let up. Within a few days now he lowould be traveling along the course of the n.Little Fish, and the mystery would be alcleared up.

HE storm was growing worse than ever just now. Dan closed the flap of his tent and crawled into his sleeping-bag.

He was just falling asleep when a sharp

hyelp from Miska, the leader of his team, awakened him. Next moment all five dogs were giving tongue furiously.

Dan sprang to his feet, shook off the rcbag, and went to the tent entrance. In spite arof the windbreak, the ground was hidden ffeunder a considerable depth of snow, which had piled up about the tent, so that it was with difficulty Dan managed to force his tinway into the open.

The dogs were on their feet, howling, their noses pointing down toward the river. Dan listened, but he could hear nothing. He waited tensely, trying to strain his hearing to take in something beyond the howling of the storm and the whip of the willow branches.

The dogs were trained beasts, and not subject to needless alarm. They would not have bayed unless there were some ma-

rauder about the camp.

Yet surely nothing was likely to be at large on such a night as that, unless some prowling wolverine. Probably it was a wolverine, Dan decided, which had followed his trail in the hope of obtaining some of the camp refuse, or of snatching a piece of meat.

Again there came an outburst of excited baying from the animals; and now, as he listened again, Dan fancied that he heard something more than the howling of the

gale.

And then he heard it—unmistakably: a faint cry that seemed to come from far out in the darkness, down by the river. Then once more nothing but the wind.

The cry of some hurt beast, perhaps? No, the cry of a human being, lost in the storm. Dan knew he was not mistaken on that point.

Fastening his mackinaw about his neck, Dan pushed his way through the patch of willows and emerged into the open. Here the full fury of the blizzard struck him, making him breathless for the moment, and almost knocking him over. He drew in a chestful of air, and charged, head down, into the storm.

Instantly he had become coated with ice. The dash of the sleet against his face was like whip-tips, and it was only with the utmost difficulty that he could direct his course at all, while in a moment the patch of willows had vanished into the dark behind him, as if it no longer existed.

Fortunately the course lay straight down the slope, and was short enough for Dan to be able to feel his way directly toward it by the lie of the ground; otherwise it would have been sheer madness to have ventured even a hundred yards from his camp in such a storm.

But that madness lay exactly along the line of his duty, and Dan braced his muscles to meet the wind, and fought it as if it had been a human adversary, until he found himself under the shelter of the slope. Here the force of the gale was less violent. Dan struggled along until the branches of the dwarf willows and alders along the river bank whipped his face and body; and now he stopped and listened for the cry again, uncertain as to the direction from which it had come.

He could not hear it. He shouted at the top of his voice, but his own cries seemed to be cut off instantly by the violence of the wind. He drew his service revolver, and fired it, but he could hardly hear the sound of the shots. The wind was blowing directly off the river, and it seemed impossible that the sound could have carried to any one lost along its banks. Still that had been undeniably a human cry. And Dan began to beat a course up and down the stream over the ice, zigzagging from shore to shore, and selecting the more sheltered nooks, in which it seemed possible that a lost person might have taken refuge.

Yet in spite of his confidence in his own ears, it seemed impossible to Dan that there could be a human being anywhere within a hundred miles of him-anywhere nearer than Corporal Lafontaine and his prisoner at the head of the Little Fish. There was no mission, no trading post anywhere nearer than the Mackenzie, and that was a hundred and fifty miles to the west of him.

Then the idea occurred to Dan that this might be Lafontaine with his prisoner, trying to make his belated way back to civilization.

And with this possibility in mind, Dan pursued his search as methodically as was possible under the circumstances, now along one bank of the stream, and now along the other, but always counting hispaces back and forth from the point where he had descended the bank, and shouting at intervals, until he felt himself growing numb from the whipping sleet.

He stopped. Again he began to wonder whether he had been the victim of his imagination; whether it was the cry of some animal that he had heard.

Once more he shouted. And then, quite clearly, Dan heard the cry again. It came from a point upon the nearer bank of the river, and about a hundred paces down-

Instantly he began running toward the spot, and shouting at the top of his voice, while he emptied the last cartridges in his revolver.

RANTICALLY he beat about, sho ing, and yet finding nothing. Nothinh could now have been audible above ers wind, which had reached the top notch ne its infernal crescendo. Yet-there was " little clump of alders that had escar'ar Dan's notice. If the lost human being w had cried were not within them-

He plunged into it like a bull, whippina the stunted growth with his numbed arry Still nothing! But wasn't that a crackli among the branches, just a little furthou

And of a sudden something seemed of detach itself from the night—a fragme of darkness, cut off from the darkness, p solving itself into a moving pillar of en that bore an odd resemblance to a humba form.

It staggered toward him, and, with a lelt cry that was barely audible, dropped at Itif

Dan raised it. In a moment, to her amazement, he discovered that it was thus body of a woman that he was holding lia his arms.

CHAPTER II

N INDIAN squaw, was the thought that flashed immediately through the mind—an Indian woman lost, as eve she might pardonably be lost in a storm ro that. But, though the darkness was almou impenetrable, Dan quickly realized that three woman was no squaw.

No Indian woman wore a mackinaw bu neath furs that had been put together-ac as Dan could realize at once—by a furrien Nor did Indian women wear fur caps lina the one pressed down over the girl's hai which was short—something still unknowne among Indian women except in the largea settlements.

Whoever this girl was, she was white and, apart from all the other evidenceur Dan was able to sense that fact by some

process of intuition.

And, finally, it was English that the gitt was speaking, English with just that trace of an accent that told Dan her native tongue was French.

But when, to his amazement, Dan hear his own name on the girl's lips, he franklo abandoned the problem of her presence there as being, for the time, at any rate insoluble.

She spoke Dan's name before conscioust ness had come back to her, murmuring in hoherent phrases that Dan could not unerstand. Then, seeming to realize where thae was, tried to free herself.

as "Sergeant Kane—I came to tell you—to

aparn you that—"

The words were barely audible to Dan as e placed his ear against her lips—so close phat they brushed his cheek, and he seemed be reading by their movements.

"You must turn back, or you will lose tour life," Dan heard again. "There is no ray over the swamps to where you wish

do go."

ne But the intense struggle to speak seemed , o have exhausted the little vitality that emained. Suddenly the girl went limp in man's arms again, and this time she did not tir. As her cheek touched his own, Dan lelt that it was not only icy cold, but frozen tiff.

All speculation as to her presence there, her acquaintance with his name and the burpose of his journey disappeared immeliately for Dan, in the face of the urgent need of getting the unconscious girl at once o warmth and shelter. Picking her up in is arms, Dan began carrying her through ghe fringe of alders and up the slope from the river toward his camp.

It was no more than three hundred yards rom the river bank to the patch of willows, out Dan had covered three miles with treater ease under other conditions. With he weight of the girl in his arms, the gale buffeting him, and the sleet whipping his r-ace, every step was a struggle, while the ienow was already so deep that Dan sank half-way to the knee in it at every step.

But the camp—impenetrable as the darkwiess was, Dan had thought it would be an gasy matter to find it. He miscalculated, n spite of the experience of years. The thowling of the wind completely drowned emy sound from the dogs, and the girl, a mlead weight in his arms, impeded his sense of direction. The slightest angle of divergince, and the camp was lost.

AN had actually gone beyond it, and was stumbling on into the Barrens, when in a momentary lull of the wind, the sound of a dog's challenge some distance no his left stopped him.

te He had missed certain death by the grace of a moment in the force of the hurricane. ist seemed inconceivable that he could have inlundered so badly. He turned and sought he direction from which the sound had come. Again he had miscalculated, but this time on the right side. That velp had seemed to come from a hundred and fifty yards' distance, and little more than a score of paces brought Dan up short among the willows, to the accompaniment of the full-

throated chorus of the pack.

In another moment Dan could distinguish the outlines of the tent. He got the flap open, and carried the girl inside. He laid her down upon his sleeping-bag and tried to light a candle, but the violence of the wind, even through the canvas, made this impossible. It was straining against the ropes, and threatened every moment to be

blown bodily away.

That was a chance that had to be taken. Dan remembered that there was a little wood left, as well as some scraps of birchbark, and in the shelter among the willows where he had made his fire there was still a little glow among the embers, fanned by the winds. A strip of dry bark and a handful of twigs, and this time the gale was his ally. It caught the fresh fuel and quickly kindled a roaring fire.

Dan filled the kettle with snow, waited till it had melted, and filled it up again. Then he went back into the tent. The next half-hour he spent in restoring the circulation in the girl's face, hands and feet. It was no time to stand upon punctilio, and, though the skin still felt as icily cold to the touch, Dan knew, when the half-hour had gone-knew from the little moans of pain which escaped the girl's lips—that the blood was beginning to circulate anew through the arteries.

It was an eerie sensation, being in the little tent alone with a girl whose face he could not see. From her voice, when she had whispered those few words of warning to him upon the river bank, Dan had judged that she was educated—at least, no product of the river settlements. What he had been able to glimpse of her figure—though he had seen nothing of her face—had given him the idea that she was young. But in the complete darkness of the tent Dan could see nothing at all of her, though he had been engaged in reviving her for a half hour past.

Romance had entered Dan's life little enough, and in his younger days the white bird had displayed herself to him with more or less sullied wings. That had made him avoid women. None in the least approximating to his early ideals had ever come

within his ken. And so what might have been a flair for romance had turned in another direction, into the love of the glorious drama of the woods and tundras in the changing seasons, the beauty of the wild, and the thrill of the man-hunt.

/ ET, as he tried to restore the girl to consciousness, Dan felt the piquancy of the situation. The kettle was boiling now, and Dan had mixed tea with a little brandy from his tiny stock, and was trying to make her swallow some of the mixture. He replaced the woolen socks and the small moccasins before she revived, and the gloves upon the hands which, firm and capable though they felt, were not rough like a squaw's hands, or those of a trapper's wife. And when the first broken words came again from the girl's lips, Dan knew that his estimate of her had not been a mistaken one.

"Is it thou, Alphonse?" she muttered in French. "Thou art safe? No, thou canst trust me. I shall never fail thee so long as -see that there comes no harm to-

She was struggling up. Dan heard a gasp of dismay come from her lips as she seemed to realize that she was in strange surroundings, and he put his hand gently on her arm.

"But where am I? I cannot see! Ah, the storm was terrible. I was lost, who is it?"

"Don't be afraid," said Dan. "You're quite safe now. I am Sergeant Dan Keane, of the Police."

She gasped, and, dark though it was, Dan seemed to feel the girl's eyes fixed upon him. However, she ceased to struggle.

"You-you are Sergeant Keane?" she whispered. "Then how-how did I get here? Where am I?"

"You're in my tent," answered Dan. guess you got lost on the trail. I heard you crying out about an hour and a half ago, and I found you on the ice of the river, and carried you back here. You were badly frozen but you're getting along all right now."

"Yes, I remember," she answered in a whisper. "I was-looking forchecked herself abruptly. "What are you going to-?"

"You mustn't be distressed. There's nothing to be afraid of."

"I am not afraid-for myself. I am afraid for-you!"

But it was clear that her strength was

completely exhausted. Her voice failed g's "You must not try to talk any more non Dan interposed. "We're both safe for is night, at any rate, and you can tell le about it in the morning. There was as body with you, I suppose?" he added. rn "No, there was -no one. But you-way

are you going to do tonight?" itr "Oh, I can rustle up a bed somewh D

outside," Dan answered lightly. "It's preve well sheltered among the trees, and I th the storm is letting up a little."

She tried to utter some sort of protestou that, but she was too obviously weary. na a moment she had relapsed into uncon sciousness, and Dan, after listening a I N ment to her regular breathing, satisfied tr she was on the way to recovery, left 1

He had spoken lightly enough, but it we no joke attempting to find shelter in ton gale, even though it did appear to be sligur ly diminishing in force. He made a plaa for himself among the dogs on the lee sirl of the loaded sleigh, and found hims fairly well sheltered. The tarpaulin, as write as he was able to stretch it over him, kehe out a modicum of the snow. But it w bitterly cold, the little fire had gone out good now, and the only thing to do was ro endure it.

Dan, huddling down, passed one of En worst and coldest nights in his experien ha Sometime he dozed, but all the time he was conscious of revolting nerves and flesh ne ing the breaking point. It was too can even to speculate as to the presence the girl, apparently with neither dogs ran sleigh. Well, he would learn the explane tion in the morning.

CHAPTER III

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AWN came at last, just when pr seemed as if he could bear the cohe no longer. It came in dull, opaklai cent gray, with no hint of any sun in tsh overcast sky, but the snow had almohe ceased to fall, and the gale had blown itsesh out into a strong wind. There was mo than a foot of snow on the ground.

Dan scooped with stiffened fingers in tisle snow until he had gathered another litthe store of twigs and dead branches. He mad a bare patch among the trees, and, wit some more of the birchbark, managed al kindle a fire and put the kettle on. He ha some biscuit left over; that, with bacc

d tea, would have to provide the morn-

led g's meal.

e no He had just got the kettle boiling, and for is wondering whether he ought to go intell le the tent and make sure that the girl vas as all right, when she came out. He ed. rned at the sound of the tent flap being -wawn back, and saw her standing in the trance.

ewh Dan smothered an exclamation. He had prever dreamed that she was a girl like that!

I the place of the frontier type that he had oked for, he saw-if not the girl of his y. naracter, at least one of the types that had uncone to the composition of that ideal being. an Not very tall, but straight as a young ed tr sapling, she stood there, watching him. ft little over twenty, but not much more, rith the figure of youth, dark hair, gray it wes that met his own; and yet there was tomething about the face that showed masligurity of experience rather than of years plhat was the immediate impression that the e sirl presented.

ims She came hobbling toward him, and Dan s wried to give her his hand to help her, but

kehe ignored it.

t w "How are you feeling?" he asked.

ut "I'm feeling fairly well, except for the ras rostbites." Yes, the slight accent was unloubtedly French, but she was speaking f English to Dan, probably not supposing en hat he spoke the one tongue almost as well was the other.

ne "You saved my life, Sergeant Keane

cand-

ce "It was lucky I happened along," Dan ranswered, in a clumsy attempt to obviate lather thanks. "Won't you sit down on the sleigh? The tea's about ready. I haven't any milk. We'll talk afterward. I hope

you'll like my bacon."

Dan helped her to the sleigh. As she apin proached it, the dogs, which had watched other, growling and bristling, subsided. She aldaid a hand caressingly upon each of the tshaggy heads, and the beasts fawned before moher. Dan gave her a tin mug of tea, but tseshe would not eat anything.

"You said there was nobody with you," Dan began, "but of course you have a tisleigh and somebody in the neighbor-

itt hood?"

"I have nobody," answered the girl.
"But—you can't have been traveling alone, without even a pack?"

ha "I say that I have nobody," she repeated

peremptorily. "I came here to warn you. I know who you are, and that you are going to relieve Corporal Lafontaine and take Monsieur La Rue back with you. But you are on the wrong route. There's no way over the muskeg to-where you're going. You'll die in the swamps, you and your dogs."

'You seem to know a good deal about me and my plans," said Dan. Instantly something impersonal had sprung into their relationship. Dan had not even a description of Jehane La Rue. And yet-could it be

possible that this girl was she?

T WAS not possible. She could not have been a member of the outlaw gang that had been guilty of almost every known crime against God and man. In the year during which they had been at large, before the rumors filtering down to Divisional Headquarters had resulted in the sending of a patrol into their territory, they had blazed their way through the north to the accompaniment of murder and rapine among the Indians, culminating in the murder of a Hudson's Bay Company factor and the seizure of a hundred thousand dollars' worth of fur.

And ever at their head had been Alphonse La Rue, the craftiest, most cunning, and most cruel of any outlaw that ever blazed his trail across the wastes.

No, this girl could not possibly be Jehane

La Rue. And yet-

"You have come-from somewhere-" Dan began slowly, "to warn me that I cannot reach my destination. Who are you that you should take so much trouble for a

stranger?"

"Never mind who I am. Suppose I am the wife or daughter of a trapper. Suppose that I happen to know, confidentially, that you cannot succeed. Isn't that enough? The Police cannot ask impossibilities of their men. Turn back, and try the northern route, if you must, when the weather is open-

She was confused, inventing reasons, and Dan felt his heart hardening. The little glimmer of romance that had been lit for him the night before had vanished. Dan had more than once confronted women who had sobbed and clung to him, pleading

without avail for their men.

"Perhaps," he said with deliberate slowness, "perhaps you can give me news of Corporal Lafontaine?"

"I can tell you nothing. I've said all I

had to say. I came to warn you."

"For which I'm much obliged," answered Dan grimly. "But please remember that I am a policeman. It is my duty to do everything in my power to elicit the information I need, and with which I believe you are able to supply me."

"You mean you're going to hold me as your prisoner?" cried the girl, while Miska raised her head and uttered a low growl, as if she sensed the tension in the air.

"By no means, but naturally, if you are alone, I cannot leave you to go wherever you are going without dogs or supplies. woman alone in the northland is under the protection of the Police. It is a part of my duty."

"Protection!" she looked at Dan, a contemptuous smile beginning to curve her mouth. There was the consciousness of power in that smile of hers; helpless as she might have been the night before, Dan knew that he was not dealing with an inexperienced girl.

"And so your duty requires me to be your traveling companion to the Great Bear —and perhaps show you the way across the muskeg?" the girl demanded.

"There is a way, then?" countered Dan; and she flushed and bit her lip. He did "Why is it not follow up his advantage. necessary to speak of your being a prison-er?" he continued. "As things stand, you are certainly incapable of leaving me and continuing your journey, wherever you are planning to go, alone. Your feet are badly frostbitten. You couldn't make more than a mile or two. A fresh storm may come up at any time. So, you see-

"I prefer to be frank and call things by

their right name," the girl retorted.

"Then suppose you answer me two questions frankly. First, your name and where you come from; second, whether Corporal Lafontaine is alive and well."

"I have said that I can tell you nothing." "Then our positions are pretty well defined after all. I must tell you that I am now going out to pick up the trail you took last night, to find out all that is possible. I shall be back early in the afternoon. Please make yourself as comfortable as possible."

"You are insolent!" she cried, springing to her feet, but wincing with pain as she did so. "You mean to keep me your prisoner. Very well-I suppose I cannot cross the snows without my snowshoes and without supplies. But at least I ask to be la spared a conversation of this character, eat

And, with an indignant gesture, she ma Da her way inside the tent. Dan looked again her until the flap had closed. He whistal the Then he tightened his belt alg. thrust his feet into the straps of his snoy as shoes, and set off down the slope towa ost the river.

NCE on the surface, he had lithuring difficulty in locating the alder pateen D from which he had retrieved the girl t night before. There the snow still indicatome their encounter, though a good deal mohin had fallen since that time. And Dan begigh a close examination of the surface, in tof endeavor to discover the tracks that t girl had made, and trace them backward ent

In this attempt he was completely baffleby For a short distance about the alders Dwas could make out the marks of snowshoe but so much snow had fallen during the night that he quickly realized the attemmis must prove a failure. Still, if the girl hava come down-stream, as he imagined, the for ought to be the remains of a campfire nea

And for three or four miles Dan went and fro from bank to bank, examining bot the bed of the stream and the higher groun above, but fruitlessly.

In the end he had to confess himse de beaten. Whatever indications there migh have been lay buried, like her tracks of thac previous night, beneath a foot of snow.

Dan covered several more miles, how H ever, before he abandoned hope, makin o sweeping detours on both sides of the rive h At last, when the sun was midway in the west, he started back for his camp.

The dogs greeted him with an outbure v of baying. It was almost as if they knew that everything was not quite as it ough a to be, and were trying to announce the fac 1 to him. But Dan knew what had happened a the moment he reached the little windbreak of willows, for the evidence lay plain enough before his eyes.

Of course the tent was empty. Also, hi skis were missing from the sleigh. And the course of the skis, which he had seen a soon as he reached the willows, ran in two more or less parallel lines, straight away from the tent toward the frozen river, and then pointed northward in the direction of Dan's destination. The shallow grooves in the snow showed black in the gray light of to le late afternoon, and were visible for a ter, eat distance.

e ma Dan looked at the lines and whistled a gain. The girl was even more resourcehistl than he had given her the credit of betag. She must have lulled his suspicions sney assuming a greater incapacity from the lower ostbites than she was actually suffering.

Ie had thought her helpless without her nowshoes, which she had lost at some time litturing the night, but what a fool he had papeen to overlook the skis!

Dan had no doubt that the girl was in catome way connected with La Rue. Some-mohing had been in his mind all through the legight before he dragged it up to the levels of the consciousness, and knew what it was.

When the girl had begun to revive in the d ent the night before, she had addressed him floy the name of Alphonse. And Alphonse Dwas the name of the prisoner, La Rue.

That she was actually Jehane La Rue, the prisoner's wife, and murderess, Dan disministed from his mind as incredible. But it has obvious that surprises would be in store for him when he reached the Little Fish.

CHAPTER IV

UT Dan was fuming with impatience. He had wasted a day, when each day might mean a matter of life or death to Corporal Lafontaine. Hitherto Dan had believed it probable that some accident, or perhaps the scurvy to which Lafontaine had referred in his last report to Headquarters, might have been the cause of the nonappearance of the corporal with his prisoner. But now Dan hardly ventured to hope that Lafontaine was still alive.

He knew, of course, the celerity with which news flies through the vast reaches of the northland. The whole land, desolate as it is, is a vast whispering gallery. That he was on the way to relieve Lafontaine must have been bruited abroad from the very day he started; there was not a tepee anywhere from the Saskatchewan to the northern ice in which his mission would not have been discussed. And the girl's mysterious appearance, and her evident acquaintance with facts that were as yet concealed from him, made him fear for the worst.

He cursed himseli for the folly that had permitted her to escape so readily. But it was no time to lament the past. It was essential now that he should cover the remainder of the journey as swiftly as possible.

It was too late to start that day, but at the earliest dawn Dan was afoot, harnessing the dogs. They were well away before it was light, and though more snow during the night had obliterated the ski tracks he struck the same general course over the Barrens, which gradually descended toward that cloudy patch on the far horizon which indicated Dan's destination. The sun shone bright by now, but over that distant blur there was no sunlight.

It was the center of the drainage bowl, a region dank with the mist that rose perpetually from the marshes, and shunned like a pestilence by man and beast alike.

Four days later Dan struck the Little Fish, and followed its tortuous course toward the head. The map that he had brought with him was mostly guesswork, or compiled from tradition, since this region was practically unknown. It showed a crude triangle, which Lac Ste. Thérèse as one point, and the shore of the Great Bear another, with the head of the Little Fish as the apex.

The most difficult part of the journey had now begun. Along the scrub-fringed bank of the river ran a rough trail, made perhaps by Indians in the long ago, flying from hostile tribes, and kept open by the few beasts of the Barrens that passed that way. A little distance on the other side of the trail, beyond the fringe of undergrowth, the muskeg began. It bore the weight of the sleigh, but progress was almost impossible, for the surface was soft even beneath the snow, while the whole region was dotted with quickmud holes of fathomless depth, as Dan knew, making any attempt to cross it almost certain destruction.

Hence Dan made no attempt to shorten the journey by any quick cuts from point to point of the winding river course, though, when the stream bent snakewise upon itself, the temptation was strong. Instead, he forced his way doggedly onward, being often forced to stop and clear a path for dogs and sleigh with the ax through the dense thickets of tangled fern, blueberry shrub, and swamp laurel.

On the night before he expected to arrive at his destination, Dan had flung himself down to rest exhausted from the labors of an arduous day. He had forced the pace to the utmost in his anxiety to reach Corporal Lafontaine, and in spite of it he had covered less than an average day's march across the Barrens. Sleep descended upon him, dense and stupefying, yet crowded with the phantoms of the past, an unmeaning procession of dream images occasioned probably by the over-exhaustion that kept his brain in activity.

His anxiety for Lafontaine had grown still more acute, too. Each hour of the march had increased his apprehensions for the corporal, and his eagerness to reach the cabin, so that in sleep his mind still pursued the accustomed succession of thoughts, picturing vague disasters.

HEN of a sudden the sense of imminent personal danger broke into this dull nightmare, and, half-waking, and not yet realizing where he was, Dan instinctively flung back his head and shoulders. At the same instant the bang of a revolver, almost in his ear, and the acrid stench of powder in his nostrils brought to him instant realization of his surroundings.

He had felt the wind of the bullet, the powder stung his cheek; the starlight, very faintly illumining the interior of the tent, showed Dan a shadow against the canvas.

Dan reacted with the instant automatic response of a man trained to meet such emergencies. A sideward spring from the half-supine position in which he was lying placed in his hand the revolver that had been in his belt beside the sleeping-bag. The same movement brought him into contact with the wall of the canvas, just as the revolver of the intruder cracked again.

Again the shot missed—and then Dan and the other were struggling in the folds of the tent, while the dogs bayed furiously, and strained at the sleigh to which they were fastened.

For a moment Dan thought he had succeeded in grappling the intruder through the canvas. Then it slipped through his fingers, and his struggles only entangled him more thoroughly. To fire was not only contrary to the code of the Police, which reserves the use of the revolver for the last emergency, but was impossible. In the dark, Dan could see nothing. He fought his way free somehow—and then he found himself under the stars, piled among the wrangling, snarling dogs.

He disengaged himself and looked about him for his assailant, but there was no moon, and the terrain, which was a small, open space in the heart of the river scrub, though it formed an excellent windbres afforded complete cover for just such of treacherous attack as had been made upen him. Dan had, in fact, selected it only he cause the alternatives had been the miskeg, which was not to be thought of.

Nevertheless, through the volleys of le rious baying Dan fancied that he heard or crackling in the bushes some distant down the stream. He crossed the open three bounds, revolver in hand.

"Halt, or I fire!" he shouted.

He heard the crackling again, some diractance to the right, and discharged the welt pon twice in that direction. But there followed only silence. Pushing his we through the undergrowth, Dan saw the fith level of the illimitable swamps extendint before him. But nothing was moving of them, nor, so far as he could see, was the sleany human figure anywhere.

He raged to and fro along the fringe co the undergrowth. But, as he began to gro cool, he recognized that his assailant have succeeded in effecting his escape. This chances of discovering him were growing momentarily less.

Dan was about to return to the cam ac when he noticed something lying upon that white level of the snow some distance away than and hurried toward it. He picked it up.

It was a snowshoe. In that fact ther was nothing strange. No doubt it had been fadropped by his assailant, who had no maked to wait to pick it up.

But it was smaller and more elongate than a man's snowshoe. It was a woman's and the inference was unmistakable.

And now Dan could see the tracks lead wing from this point. They ran straight along the fringe of the brush into the distance, and side by side with those of the other snowshoe were the imprints of a small it moccasined foot.

If the girl were trying to escape with a single snowshoe, it would not be a difficult matter to overtake her. The imprints of the moccasin sank deep into the snow which lay soft above the muskeg. He followed the tracks for half a mile along a narrow trail, and down to the ice of the river bed.

And here a surprise awaited him. Outlined distinctly upon the snow-covered surface were the marks of a sleigh and dogs, and among the confused imprints of feet Dan could see the impressions of another pair of snowshoes, this time a man's.

dbrea The sleigh had evidently halted at this such oint to wait while the girl went to Dan's e upent upon her murderous mission, for here nly he tracks ceased. Dan could read the story e mis well as if it was being reenacted before of his eyes. The girl had returned, and the of fleigh had turned around and made its eard ourney back toward the point from which start had come.

nore difficult, for in the faint light it was not easy to disentangle the two sets of the diracks, made in the going and returning. Welt was plain enough to Dan, however, that the fothe girl had been accompanied by a man. We Half a mile further along the stream the fithere was another difficulty. The trail of the mile further shows the further bank of the river, indicating that the theisleigh must have been waiting for her, and that she had joined it at this point. Dan ge could see where the dogs had rested.

gro But—and this was inexplicable—there havere also the tracks of the girl's mocca-Th sins made on the snow further along the

win river bed, going both ways.

In other words, the girl seemed to have cam accompanied the sleigh along the river, at hand at the same time to have joined it at way the point where her single tracks converged pools down the bank.

her Dan scrambled up the bank. He could bee faintly see the line of tracks across the no muskeg. There was no doubt but that the girl had joined the sleigh at that point in ate the river bed.

quarter of a mile further. Always there and were the double snowshoe tracks, made

ght going and returning.

Then came glare ice, on which the tracks the were hopelessly lost, and Dan knew that it would be a waste of time to attempt to pick them up further along. They were not likely to tell him anything more than the had learned already. He turned back of toward his camp, stopped for a moment, and regarded the snowshoe that he held fol- with a grim, cynical smile.

(a "That's what I'd call gratitude," he said the aloud. "We're going to have a showdown,

lady, when we meet again."

He started on the return journey, but, within a short distance of his camp, he gs, saw something that he had overlooked. At a certain point at the edge of the river the er snow was trampled, as if by a number of feet. From the confused impressions it

looked very much as if a scuffle had oc-

And in the centre of the patch something else was lying. It was a hunting knife, not very long, but of razor sharpness. And all along the blade was a sticky, viscid substance. What that was, Dan knew very well.

CHAPTER V

T WAS anywhere between midnight and morning, but, Dan's watch having stopped, he had no present means of gauging the time. In the light of what had occurred, further sleep that night was clearly impossible for him. The discoveries had thrown him into a feverheat of impatience and speculation. Furthermore, in addition to the risk of renewed attack, if he remained where he was, and his eagerness to be in a position to understand who the girl's companion had been, and whom he had been fighting on the bed of the stream, Dan was consumed with impatience to complete the few remaining miles of his journey and clear up the mystery of Lafontaine's silence.

The moon was rising slowly in the east. It would give light enough in a little while, though at present it was hardly more than a major planet. Dan whipped the protesting dogs into harness with savage vehemence, flung tent and sleeping bag upon the sleigh, and resumed the interminable journey.

A little further on the thick brush beside the Little Fish dwindled and then gave way to muskeg, which now extended on both sides of the stream clear to the brink; the Little Fish itself ran at the bottom of a deepening gorge, over a stony bed, and impetuously enough to prevent ice forming over the rushing torrent in the center. To travel on its surface was therefore an impossibility. However, the muskeg seemed firm enough, though here and there were holes filled with viscid marsh water. It was odd to see water in that bitter cold, but Dan knew that it would tax the strength of the northern winter to freeze those treacherous depths—at least, hard enough to make travel safe.

He walked ahead, testing the ground, and at the same time keeping a lookout for any attempted repetition of the attack on the part of the girl. But the muskeg troubled him more than any anticipations of danger at her hands, for now, as far as Dan could see, the land lay flat as a pancake, unrelieved by any growth except here or there a stunted birch or willow. It would be difficult for even the girl to find

ambush anywhere near.

Dan knew the muskeg was treacherous, but he utterly disbelieved the girl's statement that it was impossible to reach the cabin. He believed she was connected with the gang, that they had reappeared, and Lafontaine's presence at the rendezvous seemed to him improbable in the extreme. And yet the consciousness of the imminent danger stirred Dan's heart and quickened his pulses. To match one's wits against the killer, to uphold the law and the repute of the Force in the wildest regions—that was life, to Dan.

OUR after hour he pursued the march, while the moon climbed the sky, until the land lay almost as bright as in the day before his eyes. And Dan was nearing the end of his journey. According to the map, the cabin where Lafontaine had trapped LaRue lay at the upper end of the long, narrow lake that had already appeared on his left hand. And now Dan was skirting its borders, only to discover that it contained, not water, but muskeg clear to the brim.

This was the very bottom of the bowl drained from the surrounding mountains. Dan tossed a small boulder upon the quivering surface. It sank slowly, as if into viscid oil, spreading ripples of mud around it. The glassy surface closed over it. And not even snow would lie upon the face of the muskeg. Either it was engulfed or it melted from the warmth generated by the perpetual decomposition and fermentation going on beneath.

Dan shouted to the dogs, and, running back, swung the gee-pole hard over. The sleigh, which was already teetering upon the brim of the lake, swung around and resumed its journey upon firmer ground.

For perhaps twenty minutes longer Dan continued the march. Soft as the ground was, he had discovered that it was passable wherever the snow lay deep. Then the head of the lake came into sight, and simultaneously the panorama of Dan's destination unfolded itself in the moonlight.

The spectacle was not in itself remarkable, but it appeared so after the long expanse of monotonous marsh across which

Dan had been traveling. The head of tow muskeg lake was, in fact, the rim of tow bowl. Upon a low ridge of land, fring with timber of a size that Dan had not seen since he left the timber limits behind him, there stood such a building as had certainly not expected to discover its latter desolate region.

It was an old chateau, built of logs, a ree resembling those seignioral manor housed that are still to be seen in Quebec Profit ince, though on a small scale. All about was waste land, covered with young tree halbut evidently, from its appearance, on Wit cleared ground. And at the head of the lake, but separated from the chateau by strip of muskeg, perhaps three hundre yards in width, and surrounded by thonly same bog, was a small island.

It was not more than about an acre her extent, its boundaries clearly defined sind the moonlight. On this, in the midst of Da growth of smaller timber, was a great masbur of stone, perhaps the size of a large hous and about as high. It was one of the ate outcroppings of limestone that are not in the frequently found in that country when but at some time in past ages a landslide ha Gridisplaced the accumulated débris of age he and disclosed the basic rock.

At the foot of this mass of stone was long, low structure built also of logs, an bed

looking like a trading store.

Chateau and trading store faced ead for other across that rim of bog, and it wa do evident that at some time in the past the had been intimately associated with on as another.

The trading store, according to the divirections that Dan had received, marked fall the end of his journey. A quarter of a the mile further, and he would know whether tarding the Lafontaine was alive or dead.

He cracked the whip, and the dogs, as if they understood that the toil of the long journey was almost over, strained against their breast-straps. For a few moments the sleigh bounded over the snow. Then it be gan to drag, went on a little way, and stopped. Dan saw that there was no longer snow beneath it.

The utmost efforts of the animals were unable to budge it. And they were mired to the knees.

As

Then Dan discovered that he himsell was already ankle-deep in the soft bog. Almost imperceptibly it was sucking him

of town, closing softly about his feet, his legs. of t Man and dogs were alike trapped in the ring aw of the dreaded muskeg!

as A free himself from the trap. To pull ver is legs free was not difficult, for the swamp vas soft and yielding, but as fast as he s, arreed one foot the other sank deeper in, housind every step forward meant a renewal Proof the struggle. The dogs, now belly deep out n the mire, were howling piteously, and treenaking frantic efforts to escape in vain. on With a mighty effort, Dan forced his way to their head. Grabbing Miska, the leader, by he tugged with all his strength.

ndre He pulled her bodily from the swamp, tonly to find that he was now stuck fast to the knees; and as the terrified beast hurled ere herself against her harness, she began to sink again. Glancing back along the line, of Dan saw that the fifth dog was already

masburied to the haunches.

ous And that was the beginning of a desperthotate, hideous struggle for life, that was to t inbe a nightmare to Dan long afterward, wher both in his waking and his sleeping hours. ha Grimly he set himself to such a battle as age he had never dreamed of, there beneath

the brilliant moonlight.

In the face of the great terror, the dogs an became what they had been not many generations back. They snarled and bit and ead fought one another, and as each one went wa down those that were not so deeply trapped the tore at its throat, and tore at each other on as they fought over their prey. It was not hunger-it was the life instinct at war di with death, the same that makes wolves ket fall upon their slain companions and rend of them. And in the midst of the snarling the tangle Dan fought like a madman, a hopeless struggle destined to failure from the , as first.

Not the least terror of that nightmare ong was the look in Miska's eyes as she went under. Between man and dog there had sprung up one of those not rare affections bethat the trapper knows; Miska alone had and seemed to retain the dog nature to the end. on-

In the horror of the disaster Dan had almost forgotten that he, too, was trapped. ere As the quivering, jelly-like surface closed over the last dog, he came to the realization that he was lying prone on his face, and that his knees and thighs and shoulders were slowly sinking.

sell

og.

Behind him was the sleigh, now nothing

but a flat board upon the surface of the swamp. There was something grotesque in the sight of the supplies gradually descend-

ing into the ground.

Dan flung himself free, after a fight with the swamp as if it had been a human antagonist. He squirmed across the mud to the side of the sleigh, and threw off the supplies. They sank almost as quickly as the boulders that he had thrown into the viscid lake.

And Dan's last battle for life was of the same tragic grotesque character. Freed of the weight of its burden, the surface of the sleigh became a flat board resting on the muskeg, and in part upborne by it. The pull of the buried beasts was slowly tilting it downward at the forward end. Dan threw his weight upon the rear as a counterbalance. And for what seemed an infinity the struggle between man and swamp went on, the muskeg sucking downward, and Dan forcing up the front of the surface by hurling his full weight upon the back.

The sweat streamed down his face, his strength was leaving him; encased in viscid mud from head to foot, he fought there under the brilliant moon, which was slowly losing in brilliance as the first light of dawn began to creep over the swamp. Dan was becoming unconscious, his struggle was growing mechanical; and by degrees, as the dead beasts sank still deeper into the fathomless maw of the mud, Dan was no longer able to counterbalance their weight. Of a sudden the sucking swamp closed in.

AN found himself the sole thing on the face of the marsh, which, like a spongy mass, was rising round him. And once again, with a last effort, he succeeded in fighting himself free.

A score of yards away was safety-and he could not have moved a score of inches. But as he raised his eyes, looking back hopelessly, he heard a cry, and saw a figure standing in a tiny windbreak of willow saplings, with a sleigh and three dogs, strung out black under the moon, behind it.

Over the face of the marsh, like a huge

snake, a rope came streaking.

But of the finale of that grim struggle Dan never remembered anything thereafter. One mental picture was of himself battling against the swamp, prone on the ground; the next was of his lying on the snow, with firm soil underneath him, clutching the rope, which was bending one of the saplings to

the roots, and looking up into the face of an old Indian.

CHAPTER VI

NTO that Gethsemane of physical anguish Dan had flung the last ounce of his strength. He was dimly conscious of being lifted upon the sleigh and being drawn away. But, though the idea hazily crossed his mind that this was the man who had accompanied the girl along the river bed when she came to him upon her murderous errand, though he knew himself to be completely in the Indian's power, and might be on his way to his death, Dan was powerless to move hand or foot.

Nor did he greatly care. The tragedy in the muskeg had for the time broken his spirit, even as it had broken his body. And the affair had been the culmination of days of struggle to reach Lafontaine, which had taxed his powers of resistance to the utmost.

It was a complete physical collapse, and even when the movements of the sleigh stopped, and Dan felt himself being carried into a warm and comfortable interior, he could not arouse himself from his torpor. Unconsciousness became complete, until he opened his eyes to find himself in such strange surroundings that he started up, bewildered, and groping through a haze of confused memories before he realized that he must be in the chateau that he had seen from the other side of the muskeg.

It was mid-day, to judge from the appearance of the sun, which, some distance above the horizon, was casting long slanting rays of light into the room. Dan had been lying upon a mattress that had been placed in front of a large stove, that diffused a comfortable warmth through the long interior.

But the amazing thing was that interior. The long hall was furnished with chairs and tables that must have been transported by sleigh from some point hundreds of miles distant, there were well tanned skins for rugs, there were even two or three pictures on the well-fitted boards of the walls, which, again, must have been brought from some lumber mill. Everything seemed to indicate that this was the home of persons of breeding and refinement.

And yet there was an atmosphere of decrepitude about the interior, too. Dan could see that there was mould here and there, as if the house had long been in disuse. Old cobwebs hung from the rafters, there weturn the smell of long-closed houses in the anader It was like the ghost of an old seignion manor house momentarily reincarnated. ieur.

As Dan started up, his memories rushing back to him, the Indian came through that doorway. A very old man, with a deep near wrinkled face and snow-white hair, impa sive as his race, he moved softly towarhe Ir Dan, watching him very intently.

"You are feeling better, Monsieur?" Dan. asked in French.

"I'm feeling all right. Where am I?" lalf "In the chateau on the edge of Lac Seemp

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wa

(Dry Lake), Monsieur."

Dan strode to the window and looked ou nind He could see the mass of limestone on thwith island, apparently no more than two hun ais v dred yards across the muskeg arm, but the towa cabin itself was hidden among the trees.

"Is Corporal Lafontaine over there?

asked Dan, pointing.

"I do not know, Monsieur."

"You don't know? Is anyone there? policeman—with a prisoner?"

"I do not know, Monsieur," repeated the stru

Indian stolidly.

Dan could get nothing more out of his than that. He had already discovered that his revolver was gone, but whether the Instre dian had deprived him of it, or whether iend had fallen from his holster during his strug the gles in the muskeg it was impossible to

"Who lives here?"

"It is Mademoiselle Camille, Monsieur."

"I wish to see her."

"She wishes to see you, Monsieur, but she has had to go away."

"When will she be back?"

"I do not know, Monsieur. Perhaps by and nightfall."

"Who else lives here?"

"There is nobody else, Monsieur."

AN was growing more bewildered that Who was this girl living here alone? the That she could be the girl who had tried to murder him in his tent was, of course the unthinkable; and yet—Dan tried to puzzle or it out, but the entire situation was unthink Pe able too, and there was the matter of La- ab fontaine, which would brook no delay.

"Tell mademoiselle that I thank her for her hospitality," said Dan. "And I realize wl do that I owe my life to you also. I am going to the cabin at the head of the lake. I shall or re weturn by evening to pay my respects to he anademoiselle."

gnior "There is no way to the cabin, Monted. ieur."

ushir "But there must be a way. How could gh that cabin have been built if there is no deepneans of access?"

"There is no way, Monsieur," repeated owarhe Indian in his stolid manner.

"I'm going to find a way," answered

.pm Dan.

He stepped out of the chateau. He had alf suspected that the Indian would atac Seempt to offer some resistance, but nothing of the sort seemed to be in the old man's dounind, and, refusing to burden his mind on the with any further speculations in the face of hunhe one task that lay before him, Dan made it this way down the slope of the little plateau

toward the edge of the muskeg.

The rim of the bowl was quite clearly defined. Into this sink for centuries uncounted all the drainage of the great waterways had been carrying down the muck that filled it, so that it resembled a great pit cond the tructed by nature to hold the billions of ons of vegetable refuse that reached to the hinbrim of it, with solid earth about it. thawas a veritable lake, a sluggishly moving In stream of mire, overflowing at the farther er i end into the swamps that covered thousands rug of square miles of territory. Dan could see than a stone's throw away, with the great mass of limestone and the cabin among the ur. trees, but even without the Indian's warning it was obvious that he could not hope bu to set foot on that moving river of muskeg.

He tossed a stone upon its surface, and it sank immediately, as if in a thick, viscid oil. The whole surface quivered, stirred,

by and slowly subsided.

Dan made his way along the edge of the swamp to a point immediately opposite the head of the lake. Here, where the cabin was invisible, and the island seemed no more ed than a hundred yards away, he believed ne? there must be some way of approach.

But again each stone that he tossed into rse, the swamp sank immediately. And for two zzle or three hours Dan moved to and fro, renk. peating his experiment within a half-circle La- about the lake-head, but always with the

same result.

The sun was dipping into the horizon ize when he found himself compelled to abanng don the attempt as hopeless. Certainly at all one time the muskeg had been bridged, but he realized that it would be a matter of weeks, if not of months, to discover the

Unless there came a spell of such bitter weather as would freeze the treacherous surface hard, and of that there was at present no sign at all. The problem seemed insurmountable.

Fuming with anger, Dan returned to the chateau. The Indian had already prepared his evening meal, caribou haunch and amazing coffee. Dan found that he was ravenous. It was not until he had satisfied his appetite that he attempted to question the old man again.

"Mademoiselle Camille?" he asked.

"She awaits you, Monsieur. If you will come this way-"

With a sense of stupefaction Dan followed the Indian through a doorway at the further end of the long hall into another

It was almost as large as the hall, but furnished in a still more amazing way. On the floor was a carpet, faded and threadbare, but of a kind that Dan had never seen north of Edmonton. The chairs and tables were of carved wood, the lounge was covered with velour, and on the walls were three or four portraits of men and women, in peruke and military uniforms, in hoops and brocade.

And yet there was the same air of desolation and neglect about the place, as if it had been long closed and abandoned, as if its past had been revived only for the immediate purpose of weaving itself into his own story.

Standing in the center of the room, under a big hanging lamp, Dan saw the girl!

AN, looking at her, for the life of him could think of nothing to say to her. He realized that it was by her desire that the old Indian had saved him from death in the muskeg. Death and life seemed to have been tossed from one to the other of them, as one tosses a ball; and here they two stood face to face once more.

But the girl seemed equally at a loss. though she had arranged the interview, and she stood staring at him, a look of haggard

wretchedness upon her face.

"Well, we're quits," said Dan at length. "You tried to murder me, and now you've saved me from a worse kind of death. don't quite get the point of it all, but I suppose it has some meaning to you."

"Yes, we're quits," answered the girl.
"You saved my life, and I've saved yours.
We owe each other nothing. Perhaps I felt that we had to even up the score before we could stand in our true relationship toward each other as enemies. But—well, my emotions don't matter. Women change quickly, don't they? I want to know what you are

going to do?"

"I'll tell you what I'm going to do," said Dan. "I'm going to cross that strip of muskeg and find what has happened to Corporal Lafontaine. I'm not under any delusion that he's still alive. But I mean to learn what his fate has been. Then I shall come back. I shall learn who you are, and what your part has been in this business. And then I shall bring back La Rue and any one else who is wanted by the law. Did you suppose I meant to abandon my task?"

"You would have abandoned it for ever if I hadn't had Louis drag you from the muskeg," the girl retorted, a spot of vivid red appearing on either cheek. "There is no way to that deserted cabin. You can go to further."

"Listen to me!" Dan felt a sudden flaming anger seize him. "I've lost my dogs, everything—Miska, the best dog I've ever known. You chose to drag me from this devilish swamp. Your motives are known to yourself. But I'm going to that cabin."

And Dan felt his eyes grow moist as he thought of that last look Miska had given him. As the muskeg closed over her head she had tried to lick his hands.

"I wish I'd let you die! I wish I'd killed you in your tent!" cried the girl passionately. "I have told you again and again that there's no way over the swamps. That cabin was built before the landslide, twenty years ago."

"But there is a way, and you know what it is," Dan answered. "You're going to guide me there, and you are going to put me on the trail of Alphonse La Rue. I don't know whether you are his wife or not, but I know that you are shielding him, and I believe that Lafontaine has been murdered as Corporal Anderson was murdered."

"Alphonse La Rue?" cried the girl violently. "I told you you were mad. Don't you know that Alphonse La Rue is dead?

He died last autumn."

"Your first admission—whether true or false," answered Dan, and again he saw those spots of vivid red flame on the girl's cheeks. "Then you can also tell me as the fate of Lafontaine. And you're going answer me. If those wretches have kill him—"

"He's in that cabin," answered the gurn sullenly.

"Over there? Alive?"

"Of course he's alive. Policemen have ay many lives as a cat, haven't they?"

"Is he maimed? Disabled? No? Thusk what is he doing there now that La Rue,"

—as you say—dead? Why is he wait there? I mean to have the truth."

"He's been waiting for the muskeg lote freeze over. He's been waiting there singulated the spring, like Napoleon on a little que Helena, and I've been watching him fread here. That's funny, isn't it? He got aste in the very cold weather last March, a trapped La Rue there. It was clever asked daring of him, I grant him that. But he have to wait for colder weather than we having now before he gets out again!"

AN continued staring at her. Ever thing that the girl was saying to his seemed a tissue of lies. Suddenly his ey fell upon her arm, which she had been holror ing close to her side, under the cloak sino had about her shoulders, and he perceivelse that there was a bandage around it. The under side of the bandage was stained willse blood. Dan recalled the blood-stained knis s that he had found. And that was evidence enough that she was the woman who hagn been in his tent, even if the snowshoes hais not also pointed to her. Probably it we A the Indian, Louis, who had tried to disuade her from her murderous project, and grappled with her for the knife. Who was Jehane La Rue? Who else count she? she be?

"Listen to me," he said grimly. "Ye tell me that Corporal Lafontaine has being in that cabin for months, waiting for thin muskeg to freeze, and that you have been watching him from here and gloating own his sufferings. Probably you know that has been suffering from scurvy. Well, I'm going to pay you a compliment by saying that I believe you."

"How dare you!"

Dan smiled. "I'm taking you at you word as to that. But I know there is a warn across the muskeg, and you're going to take me there."

"You're threatening me?"

e as "Exactly. You're going to take me

oing ere."

Lil "I know one way. I'm willing to show kill u that."

"Which way?"

he g"The way in!" she cried triumphantly. Not the way out. I'll never show him the nave ay out, nor you either. I'll take you in, nd you can join him there. Two members The police trapped on an island in the muskeg! It will make a pretty story, won't Rue ?" She began laughing, a sort of spasvaitiodic choking that was almost hysteria.

"I mean," she cried, with a sudden, keg lolent gesture, "that Corporal Lafontaine sinould have saved the life of Alphonse La tle ue when he was dying of scurvy, if he froad agreed to let him go. He let him die

got istead."

a, a "What was Alphonse La Rue to you?" er asked Dan.

t he "He was my husband!" we'

CHAPTER VII

AN remained staring at her without Ever o hi uttering a word. So this girl was Jehane La Rue, as he had suspected holrom the beginning! No, not suspected k snown! She could not have been any one eivelse. He had let his mind trick him into The pretense that she might be some one wilse, but he had known from the first that, knis soon as the problem of La Rue and Lademontaine was settled he would have to rechagnize her for who she was, and—act upon s hais instructions.

W And thus everything became clear to him d-her warning, her attempt upon his life, , and the reaction of remorse, in which she waad saved him from the muskeg, probably coun the hope of being able to drive some bar-

gain with him.

'Ye She was not utterly base, then. And for bethose few moments during which Dan continued staring at her, he was conscious of been odd sense of pity for this girl. And this owns mingled with a feeling of horror that at luch a girl as that should be the wife of the Inotorious outlaw, the cruelest, vilest man yinvho had ever ranged through the north; ind that she should herself be wanted by he Police upon the charge of murder.

you A capital charge! And Canadian law wa nows no sentimentality. Dan knew as he tal tood there, looking into her face, which and grown misty, that she was destined to lang for the murder of young Anderson.

She would hang, a shapeless, masked thing, with a rope around her neck, in some grim prison yard, and the repulsive thought filled him with pity that she must inevitably come to such an end.

Pity, not only for this girl, but for every man whom he had ever in the past caught

in the meshes of the law.

For the first time in his career Sergeant Dan Keane questioned the value of his calling. But it was only for a few mo-Then came the revulsion. thought of young Anderson, a boy of twenty-two, whom he had known, foully stabbed to death by this woman while he slept, of the murdered factor, of the crimes that had filled the northland with terror-crimes with which Jehane La Rue's name was linked as well as that of her husband—came as a healthy reagent. It was perhaps the episode of the preceding day that had momentarily shaken the strong soul of the man. Dan became himself again.

And, looking into the girl's face, he was conscious of no pity for her. Rather she seemed like some hideous thing in a beautiful human body, that he must destroy, and would destroy, gladly, in the light of

But he realized that the girl had been reading more or less of what had passed in his mind.

"You have a warrant for my arrest,

Sergeant Keane?" she said quietly.

"I have," Dan answered. He had suspected from the beginning that the warrant, secretly though it had been prepared, was known to that ramifying underworld that was in touch with the Police posts everywhere.

"The fact that I have just saved your

life means nothing at all to you?"

"So far as my duty is concernednothing at all. No more than the fact that you tried to murder me a few hours before."

"Ah, you policemen. You are splendid, magnificent-machines! But still, sometimes in the course of your duty you find it necessary to make a bargain?"

"What bargain?"

"This. Whom do you want more, myself

or my-husband?"

"Both," answered Dim simply. "When I return, it will be with both of you." The question puzzled him a little, even bothered him. Surely the woman understood

that he was not open to any such bargain as the one she had seemed to suggest—that he should let her go in return for Alphonse La Rue, who she had said was dead.

ESIDES, if Lafontaine really had La Rue-

"What I mean is this. If I show you the way across the muskeg-the way in, mind you, not out; if you are blindfolded and led in by me, will you agree to let me go, find your own way out, and-capture me later?"

Dan reflected. It was not the sort of proposition that made any sort of appeal to him. But if he refused—Jehane La Rue would mean nothing unless he first relieved Lafontaine, or captured La Rue, in case Lafontaine was dead.

Lafontaine's fate must be cleared up. Dan did not believe a word of what the girl had been saying to him. He could see that she was desperate, willing to forswear herself, do anything to circumvent

"I agree to that proposal," answered Dan, after a moment of hesitation.

"You swear not to try to detain me until you have been to the island? Upon your honor as a policeman?"

"I swear it."

"Nor to remove the blindfold? well, I'll take you there as soon as it

grows light."

Impatient as he was, Dan had to rest content with that. He lay down to rest again in the long hall. He did not know where Jehane-whom the Indian had called Camille-had gone. It was no use trying to watch the front entrance of the building, for there might be a dozen ways of egress. It was highly probable, Dan reflected, that the girl was even now engaged in a murder plot more efficaciously conceived than the one which he had frustrated the night before. And he had no revolver. Still, there was nothing to do but go on. At last he was going to know the truth.

That was the last thought that passed through his mind before he dropped asleep, convinced that the subconscious would arouse him in time in case any danger threatened him. Yet when he started up hearing his name spoken, the Indian, Louis,

was already at his side.

"Monsieur, Mademoiselle Camille waiting for you outside the château."

"Tell Madame La Rue that I'll be with

her in a few moments," answered Dan woost emphasis.

For an instant he thought he saw D flicker of emotion in the impassive flabin of the Indian, but it was succeeded tree stantly by the same stolid mask. Dan favou ened his belt and went out into the dayusil Jehane La Rue was waiting just outseale the building. D

"Well, Monsieur Keane, I am here," he said, "trusting in the honor of a policis a man, as you see. Permit me to fasten thing

handkerchief."

She had a dark silk cloth in her harf h Standing on tip-toe, she began fastening bl about Dan's forehead. He felt her swar finger-tips about his eyes and in his han a Then he was standing beside her in dareco

"Come, Monsieur, permit me to guind

Dan had expected her to cross the mind keg arm; instead, he could discern the she was taking him around the head war the lake. It was evident that there was way across that narrow strip, where might be presumed the swamp, being det est, was always impassable. As he move Dan kept his hearing strained for a sounds that might be indicative of treacherous attack, but he heard nothingut-

With the girl guiding him, Dan mov " forward. Sometimes she would utter 'm brief warning as to a tree in the way, bain for the most part they walked in silenteer until Dan estimated that half an hour hor elapsed; then the girl stopped.

"You can take off the handkerchief no een Sergeant Keane," she said briskly. ind

Dan removed it and handed it to he'd During the half hour that they had be traveling the day had broken.

Dan discovered, as he had thought, than a they had circled the head of the lake; the were actually upon the extreme point or the island, with the mass of rock loomin the in front of them, and the muskeg swamnus behind. levi

"You are satisfied that I have kept "est word, as you have kept yours?" asked tou girl.

And, without waiting for Dan's answoon she broke away and began running baleac over the muskeg, Dan watched the courn she took, but it was impossible to drarou any deductions from it. Surefooted, sin a seemed to skim the treacherous surface aver wost like a bird. In a minute or two she

ad disappeared among the trees.

aw Dan turned again. Who was within the fabin. La Rue, or Lafontaine? Was La ue alive or dead? The girl had said both. faVould his approach be greeted with a lavisillade from the murderous outlaw, conealed behind some loophole?

" Dan thought the latter possibility about the strongest. And those few moments of olicis advance toward the rock were the culn ination of all the suspense that he had ndured throughout the journey. In front fair him the round orb of the sun appeared, ng blood-red rim above the surface of the Swamp. In a minute more he would know, han a minute more he would know—in a few dareconds more, Dan kept telling himself.

He was in the open now, past the trees, nd expecting every moment to feel the

hock of bullets.

Then the figure of a man appeared in the entrance of the hut, a short and rather d warthy man, wearing the King's scarlet!

CHAPTER VIII

OU'RE Sergeant Keane? I heard you were on your way, though I'm trapped in here. You'll think that strange,

ov "Corporal Lafontaine, of course? I'mer 'm mighty glad I've found you, Lafonbaine." Dan found it a little difficult to lenteep his voice under control as he gazed hor the first time into the face of the amous hunter of men. The corporal no eemed very voluble, but who wouldn't be inder such circumstances? "I was afraid

he'd be too late."

be "Nothing like that," replied the other, peaking with a strong French accent, but thn a by no means unmelodious voice. "I've theen here since spring. La Rue was dying or weeks, and I didn't know when I came min that it was by a freak, that this damned nmuskeg only freezes in the coldest weather. That freak's what got La Rue. How the levil did you make it, Keane? I tried only resterday, and got stuck to the waist. Did tou see Jehane La Rue? She came to the dge of the muskeg and shouted to me that swoou were on your way, but you'd never baleach me. And I couldn't get my hands ourn her. Why, old man, you look as if dra ou'd been up to the neck yourself! Come In and get cleaned up, and we'll talk things e aver after."

Dan gathered, from Lafontaine's volubility, that the corporal was slightly unhinged after his experiences alone upon the island. He accompanied him inside the long build-The place had been, as Dan had thought, a trading store at one time, but the long counter was gone, and there was a large table, with chairs, and three or four camp beds. It looked as if this had been the headquarters of La Rue and his gang, and it would have been difficult for them to have found a safer one.

Dan cleaned some of the mud off his uniform, and put on some clothes that the other gave him while his own clothes were drying. Breakfast was quickly prepared by his host. It consisted of bread and stewed

"How did you get the rabbit, Lafontaine?" Dan asked.

"Wire snares. I'll tell you about those rabbits later, Keane. You'll never run short of rabbits long as you're here. God, I'm sick of rabbit! I've lived on it since summer. Did you meet the La Rue woman?"

Dan told him briefly that he had made her act as his guide. He did not feel like being confidential with Lafontaine. He was becoming more convinced that Lafontaine was a little unbalanced, principally from the disconnected way in which he talked. Dan, studying him closely as they ate, concluded that he must have suffered severely.

He was disappointed in Lafontaine. He knew that for years past the famous little corporal had been on lonely trails in quest of very much "wanted" men. Decidedly any barracks polish that he had acquired in the beginning would have worn off. Still, Lafontaine was lacking in something—and Dan was trying to figure out what that something was when the corporal rose.

"Want to see La Rue?" he asked.

"You've got his body still?"

"Sure enough! Everything was frozen stiff when he died at the end of October. I couldn't dig a grave except in the muskeg, and that seemed too bad for a man like La Rue. Thought you'd like to see him, too, and sign the certificate," he laughed.

Dan did not like that laugh. He wondered how Lafontaine had known of his journey back in October. However, he asked no questions, but accompanied the other out of the door. The Frenchman led the way toward the great mass of limestone, which, Dan now saw, was seamed with fissures, as such masses usually are. He squeezed his body through one of these crevices in the other's wake.

AN found himself in a little hollow vault, about the dimensions of a small hall bedroom. Stalactites hung from the walls, with small stalagmites beneath, and the sun's rays, throwing a narrow beam of light through the narrow entrance, banded

them with prismatic hues.

The effect was indescribably beautiful. Now blue, now green, now gold, now red, the stalactites glittered like colored ice. Yet it was ghastly, too, for the little place was like a mortuary chapel. Although the stretcher cot on which the body of the dead man was lying occupied almost the entire length of one side of the cave, for a moment or two, owing to some ocular trick, or his bewilderment at the sheer beauty of the scene, Dan failed to perceive it.

Then he saw it, behind a hanging fringe of stalactites. They drooped over the cot, reflecting the colored hues upon the face of the dead man. He lay upon his back, the arms folded across the breast. The body was, of course, frozen stiff, and it did not appear to have suffered any of the change

of mortality.

Clothed in a mackinaw and heavy trousers, it lay there, a placid expression upon the hollow face, wax-white, save where the bands of light lay across it. Whatever La Rue's life had been, death seemed to have invested his features with a singular dignity, almost nobility, as it invests those of so many.

And except for the hollowness of the cheeks, and the emaciation of the face, Dan could see no signs that La Rue had died of scurvy. He bent over the body, examining it closely, but without touching it.

As he did so, the other took a step forward. "I'd keep away from it," he said with a nervous laugh. "I mean there might be danger—what I mean is, I suppose it was scurvy we were suffering from but I'm no doctor. It might have been something else.

"It might have been," responded Danplacidly. Nevertheless, he stepped back from the stretcher.

"You both had scurvy badly, did you?" he asked.

"Yes, all the summer. I tell you we were in a pretty bad way. If there had been any means of saving him I'd have given my hand to have saved his life. But he got worse from day to day."

"And you—recovered!"

"Yes, I'll tell you all about that. Ingget out of here. I suppose we'll hav M take him down to be identified?"

"We'll talk that over later," answer Dan, following his companion out into Rt pale sunlight. The Frenchman led the he back into the large room, looking over shoulder with an anxious expression two shoulder with an anxious expression two three times, as if to make sure that lab was following him. He closed the door, le, they sat down at the table again.

HE Frenchman leaned forward of fidentially. "Say, Keane," he bed "I may as well tell you some good newsman came upon some of the private stock of the La Rue gang." A sort of nervous, charling laugh came from his lips. "I'm referring to the rotten hooch La Rue dathe Indians for their furs, but his owngrivate brand. In fact, La Rue put me sto the cache where it was hidden. We aged to get through the summer on it set how, and there's still a little left. He how would a little drink feel to you? A Prohibitionist, are you, Keane?"

"Not in principle—only in practice," are swered Dan. "The fact is, I never due in Prohibition territory. I like ket to the laws that I'm paid to help enforce, that's only a personal prejudice of mine you want a drink, I guess I won't be cut upon to report it at Headquarters."

"For which much thanks," responded other with a curt laugh. "God, main you'd been shut up with a prisoner all somer, having to watch every move he min and both of you sick with scurvy, I gat you wouldn't feel so straightlaced about Well, I'll take you at your word, Kea'e,

Well, I'll take you at your word, Kea'e He crossed the room and took down bottle from a shelf, pouring out a like drink into a tin mug. Dan noticed there was a fine tremor of the fingers and did so. He came back and sat down, dring off the contents. Meanwhile Dan not uttered a word.

"Well, you want the history of this en ness, I suppose," said the Frenchman. Is you know, a party of us went up sthing over a year ago, and we got on trail of La Rue and that gang of his. I growd had certainly been playing make hell up in these parts. The Indians terrorized for hundreds of miles around

II, we didn't get them, and we didn't that cache of furs they stole after murat, ing the factor up at White's Point on hav Mackenzie, but we dispersed the gang. e rest went back, but I stayed on the

answ I had a hunch that I could get

intoRue."

the he liquor had already loosened the overnchman's tongue; the man was gesticun tung and talking loosely, tripping over the hat ables. Dan, sitting opposite him at the loor le, was gathering his impressions by the

rather than by the ear.

I had a hunch that I could get La Rue, ard o was the brains of the gang. I knew e bed married that Desmoulins girl. Old nevsmoulins built this store, you know, bek oe the landslide came down and cut it off , chm his chateau over there. He was a I'm nchman of the old school, with crazy tue dal ideas, and he wanted to carve a owngniory out of this district. Well, as I me's saying, La Rue married the Desmou-Vers girl, and there wasn't a trick he knew it she couldn't go him one better, after a ile. I trailed her, found this hangout, d trapped La Rue here last winter.

"You remember how bitter cold it was in

ce, arch. The muskeg froze, and that's er dnething happens only once in five years kee so. The gang knew the way, but I've ver found it. I blundered in like a fool, hout guessing what I was up against. e cat I guess you and I can find the way t easy enough, or maybe you've got on det right side of La Rue's woman, eh, old

main?"
(Go on with the story," answered alls

e min. The other started. "The story? Why— I gat's all. I got La Rue easy enough, but Keare been here nine months, and nearly lost life trying to get out. And the La Rue Say, old man, I'm going to get an-

Dan watched his every movement as he the bottle down from the shelf and an lped himself again. He filled the mug is lf full and drained it. Now his manner emed to have undergone a change. He is still more loquacious, and yet with a b-note of sullenness and suspicion.

on He flopped down in the chair. "Well, guess that about covers everything, eane," he said. "Now let me ask you

"Wait a little. How about that scurvy?

How did it happen that you got well and La Rue died?"

"Why, La Rue and I both had it, but he had it worse than me, because he got drunk on that hooch every night at first. I wouldn't touch it till I was left alone. Still, I didn't feel it was up to me to stop him taking a drink when he wanted one. It was all he had to live for. There was plenty of flour that the gang had left in the cache, along with the whisky, but there was absolutely nothing else-not even a bag of potatoes or compressed vegetables. couldn't get out of this damn' place to hunt our meat. We lived on flour and whisky till I remembered something I'd read about snaring rabbits with a bit of wire.

"I was going to tell you about the rab-The island's swarming with them. You see, there are wolves all around here, and when they chase the rabbits—why, the rabbits can cross the muskeg where the wolves can't. So they come here. You hear them all night long, patter, patter, when the wolves are after them. Yes, I'll never want to look a rabbit in the face again

after I get out of here.

"Well, I soon got onto the snaring trick and that saved me, but La Rue was too far gone. He died at the beginning of winter, and I've been here alone two months now, with that crazy woman flitting about out-I've been thinking of snaring her." He laughed unsteadily. "If the muskeg don't freeze soon, I guess we're in for another year of it, living on rabbits. Why do you suppose the La Rue woman let you in?"

Again Dan left the question unanswered. "There's one thing I'd like to ask, Lafontaine," he said. "How did you hold

La Rue?"

"Why, I slipped the cuffs on him every night."

"Where do you keep them?"

But Dan's eyes had already followed the other's involuntary glance toward the shelf overhead, where he saw the irons.

"What's worrying you?" the Frenchman

snarled suddenly.

"Well, you see," answered Dan, "I've been trying to figure out, if what you've been telling me's correct, how it happens that my skis are standing there against the door."

"Your skis?"

"Exactly. You see, Madame La Rue borrowed them from my sleigh one day, to leave in a hurry. There's no question but those are my skis; however, if you don't want to take my word for it, look at the leather on the right one, and you'll see that it's been ripped and sewed up with babiche."

"What the—what you mean to—?"

"Pretty clear evidence that Madame La Rue has been in this cabin lately, my friend. Sit down, La Rue, and hold your hands——"

HE lightning leap the other made did not catch Dan napping. Before he could draw the revolver from its holster Dan had overturned the table, and come crashing down upon him with it. A brief struggle, and the weapon was in Dan's hand.

"Get up, La Rue," he said. "You might have thought out a better story than that. Or you'd have done better to have tried to get away instead of trusting to those brains of yours to fool me. You see," he added, "I saw the bullet hole in poor Lafontaine's head, under the hair, behind the ear. Just reach me down those handcuffs!"

CHAPTER IX

AN had heard many strange stories about his prisoner, but the reality surpassed them. His first outburst of malignant rage ended, La Rue submitted to being handcuffed quietly enough, and relieved of his revolver, and a knife as long as a poniard, which, being hidden in his sleeve, Dan nearly overlooked. La Rue's rage was, however, vented chiefly against Jehane.

It was Dan who spoke of her, telling La Rue—as he thought it right to do—that he held a warrant for her arrest on the charge of murdering Anderson. As it was impossible for him to take in two prisoners at the same time, particularly when one of them was a woman, Dan proposed to take La Rue first to the nearest post on the Mackenzie, returning for his wife after.

"You're mighty sure of getting her, aren't you, Sergeant!" sneered the Frenchman. "Damn her, I told her the trick wouldn't work, but I let myself be persuaded."

"Just what was the idea, La Rue?" Dan asked.

"The idea? just to get you out of the way instead of killing off another policeman. It happened to suit me, that's the reason."

"I guess you trusted too much to the brains of yours," said Dan. "Well, it hadn't been for that bullet hole in Lataine's head, you might have got a with it. Didn't know the skin stretum after death, did you, La Rue? You all up in one way or another."

He was encouraging La Rue to talk ing the hope of picking up some further formation, though the murder of Lale taine had filled him with bitter hatred the murderer. He asked him how he at

the corporal.

La Rue burst into a fit of laughter. "As fontaine was dead easy, even for a police man," he grinned. "But it wasn't me ut him, it was Jehane."

Dan felt sick with horror, no less at Rue's incrimination of his wife than at thought of it. Dan was sure of one than that was there was still a good to be cleared up in respect of the motion

of Jehane La Rue.

"Easy, dead easy," La Rue went y t grinning broadly. "She crossed the musow and got him while he was asleep. Even it fontaine had to sleep sometimes. He neant caught her once. He knew she'd get himfor the end, though, and the last week of orp life he had the horrors. And that's isk way she's going to get you," he adam malignantly.

Dan was beginning to understand on prisoner's motives in hiding there instint of making a break for freedom. Unde "ably he was safer there than he would bliv he showed his face at any post along a Do of the trails. And while La Rue washat course acquainted with the secret of "passage across the muskeg, all he had had to do was to sit still and behave like a mo "prisoner until Jehane "got" Lafontaioo Unless, then, Dan could himself solve to secret, or unless the weather grew cape enough to freeze the surface of the bog, he might kick his heels there indefinitely. The was the secret of the secret of the bog, he might kick his heels there indefinitely.

And then some night—some night who his watch relaxed, as it must insensib. Jehane La Rue would come creeping acrec the swamp, knife or revolver in her haru and—he would be in danger of going him way that Lafontaine had gone.

The prospect was not a pleasant of our and Dan determined to maintain his wat fulness as long as he and his prisoner watre. That night he fastened La Riving firmly with a rope, as well as handcuffor him, in such a way that he could me.

to the fair freedom on his bed, but would La comparatively helpless. He carefully ot a reched the interior of the place for weastrett ns, and for anything that could be used an implement of offense. He barred the or, which was fortified with great bolts.

talk for the window, it was double—the ther ng had certainly known how to make Lale and out. Dan was at last convinced at it was impossible either for the later of the later he at it was impossible either for La Rue attack him while he slept, or for anyone er. " gain ingress without awakening him.

As for himself, he would have to sleep police the seal, in twenty second snatches. me ut Dan was more or less habituated to s at atchful sleep.

HERE was a pile of swamp logs outside the cabin, drawn from the musod g. Dan had noticed that logs were immotinded in it everywhere, carried down om the forest limits through centuries ent y the slow, irresistible movement of the musow tide. When the stove was ablaze, Dan lt more comfortable. The shock of Laneantaine's murder was beginning to pass. himforrible as his death had been, the little of orporal had passed as he would have ished, perhaps, to pass. And he got his aduan. And Dan was holding him.

La Rue had watched all Dan's preparand ons with a malicious grin that seemed to

instrint at some card he held in reserve.

Inde "You're taking a lot of trouble to keep ld blive, Keane, aren't you?" he drawled. ng Do you think life's so important as all washat?"

of "It's worth holding on to while we've

hadot it," answered Dan.

mo "Just run your eyes along that shelf of

ntalooks," suggested La Rue.

ve t Dan had seen the score or so of books v open one of the shelves; he had picked oog hem up one by one to make sure there vas no weapon behind them; now he rose

whnd began scanning them.

nsib They were books on philosophy, a subacrect Dan knew very little about. At La haRue's request, he handed two of them to ing iim. La Rue opened one with his manicled hands and turned the pages until he

t of ound what he was looking for.

wat "'We see life, then, envisaged as a r watruggle,' he read, 'in which the fittest sur-Rives. Let men prate of mercy, charity, cufforgiveness, tenderness toward the weak mo-Nature knows nothing of these things.

With Nature, to be strong is to be righteous, and to be cunning is to be good. That is the really divine law of life."

He looked up, the quizzical smile upon "What d'you make of that,

Keane?" he asked.

"Is that the stuff you've been reading

and twenty more volumes. They're translations of a great German philosopher, whose name has probably never penetrated to the recesses of your intelligence, Keane. That fellow's the greatest man who ever lived. He made me

La Rue spoke with sublime egotism; it was evident that he believed the philosopher in question should be proud of his

"Yes, Keane, I was a clerk in a bank in a small western Canadian town when I came across him. He showed me the true philosophy of life. When I realized that power and right were identical, I-acted. was twenty thousand dollars richer within a week after I read that. I don't know whether it's worth converting you, Keane, but if once you realized that duty, and mercy, and the rest of the antiquated rubbish are simply the bonds with which the strong hold the weak in subjection, you'd become a man, Keane. I'd even make you my lieutenant, because you've got the possibilities of good material, Keane."

Dan was quite convinced now that La

Rue's brain was turned.

"Take pity now," La Rue went on. "A slave quality. The natural instinct of man is to torture, as remorselessly as the wolf tortures the rabbit. When I killed old Mc-Pherson at White's landing, I killed him slowly, Keane. As a matter of fact, he'd given me cause to dislike him. He was begging to be finished off before the end came,

"You-damned-hound!" said Dan.

La Rue grinned. "In yielding to the primitive instinct there, I felt a thrill of power, Keane. Do you know when I expect to feel it next? When I finish you off. There's a splendid finish waiting for you, Sergeant. Don't worry—it's on its way."

Dan rose and threw another log into the

Sleep was far from him when he threw himself down on his camp-bed. He had never been in so eerie a situation before. He could see the flickering light playing upon La Rue's face across the room. La Rue seemed to be sleeping as peacefully as a child. And yet Dan was sure that he was plotting some fresh deviltry.

He had taken in desperate criminals several times, but never a madman, one filled with a strange and evil philosophy like La Rue. He had never been trapped with a mad criminal, with brains probably superior to his own, and the madman's wife outside, ready to steal in upon him with knife or revolver as soon as his guard was relaxed.

But either all Dan's instincts about Jehane La Rue were wrong, or else she was mad, too. He had heard that madness was contagious. Perhaps in the wilderness, fleeing with La Rue over the desolate wastes in the long darkness, Jehane La Rue had lost her mind likewise. Dan knew that in those solitudes monstrous egotisms take birth and come to dominate the mind.

There was Corporal Brody, a case well known among the police, but suppressed, as to the main details, from publication. Brody, patrolling the Arctic, had imagined himself a new Messiah, and enrolled a native army of three score who had converted the peaceful shores of the Cape Lyon district into a bloodstained bedlam until Brody was slain, and his empire suppressed—by a sergeant and two constables.

Certainly Jehane La Rue's attitude toward himself had not been consistent with sanity. Dan hoped with all his heart that she was not responsible, that the death of young Anderson could not legally be laid to her.

Still, sane or not, she was a constant peril. Dan was besieged, and unless the weather changed, or he could find the exit across the muskeg sooner or later LaRue's threats would be justified. He had got Lafontaine, by general consent the best man-catcher in the Dominion, as he had got Anderson. And he had not been bluffing when he had announced so confidently that he would get Dan.

As he lay there, watching the firelight on La Rue's face, Dan felt that his situation was impossible. Better—if he could have known that Lafontaine was dead—better to have taken Jehane in, and gone back for La Rue after. In the morning Dan meant to sound the muskeg thoroughly. In a day or two—a week at most—he must surely light upon the route across it.

He was falling asleep when of a sudhe started into intense wakefulness, close scious of a sound that he could not place somewhere in the island. He reached for the revolver that he had taken from Rue, and listened. As he did so, he he the howl of a wolf near at hand, taken he by another and another.

B

But that was not the sound that I and had heard. It was a continuous litare ing, more like the falling of rain thos anything else. But it was not rain. She stars were shining in a clear sky, and that pattering sound went on. Dan the thought at first that it might be some to the following of the sort, for he could the that sound coming, apparently, from along the side of the island.

He rose softly and went to the sidetain La Rue. The outlaw was sleeping, him more probably, pretending to sleep, he Dan satisfied himself that the ropes whigh bound him were intact. Quietly he drbits back the bolts of the door, and opened it that

There was nobody outside. The mopoli was low in the east, but the night was clear, and the stars so brilliant that I could see the length and breadth of the tle island, from the mass of limestone the tip, and from one edge of muskeg the other, and to the chateau on the election beyond.

Nothing seemed stirring, and at fiwhe Dan could see nothing but the trees, the muskeg, and the snow. And yet that p D tering sound went on. Suddenly thinve sounded a scream like that of a child edg mortal agony.

But he knew what it was an instaextr later—the death-scream of a rabbit, causon in one of Lafontaine's snares. Again into scream rang out, and then another, owou by the tip of the island.

No, it was not one of the snares thmus had caught the creatures. It was ting wolves, the pack of hunting wolves the T suddenly became visible to Dan. Rangthey like a file of soldiers in open order, theorestood, some distance across the musk store the lean, long bodies, the sharp snouts a had pricked ears clearly visible; and, as if the file knew that the strip of muskeg acted as a find insuperable bar between themselves at the island, they watched Dan, motionle dee and fearless.

Then of a sudden Dan saw somethintive

sud nore, and now he knew what that pattert placed overed the firm ground of the island was lack with rabbits, scurrying from the volves to safety. And Dan remembered he he a Rue's words, "The rabbits can cross he muskeg where the wolves can't."

But, if the wolves could not cross, at least they have penetrated a measurable distance over the treacherous surface. Dan that and least they have penetrated a measurable distance over the treacherous surface. Dan that they have penetrated a measurable distance over the place where he had seen those gray shadows, which had now vanshed. The wolves had partly learned the secret; in the morning he would take up the study for himself.

The went back inside the store and closed the store and

He went back inside the store and closed he door. Looking at La Rue, he saw that he outlaw was now unfeignedly awake.

"Rabbits scare you, Sergeant?" he jeered. "You ought to have seen Lafondetaine that last week before Jehane caught him. I told you he had the horrors. Thought he was being mauled by rabbits every whight. Between ourselves, it was the rabdibits got him in the end, and not Jehane, dithough it wouldn't look exactly well on the mepolice records."

CHAPTER X

vas

are the meal, Dan trussed him up again, only asking him sarcastically fiwhether he expected to find the road across the muskeg by dinner time.

t p Dan spent several hours of methodical thinvestigation, throwing stones along the ild edge of the swamp at intervals of two or three feet. The work was tedious in the astextreme. Here and there a stone would lie augon the surface, instead of disappearing am into the maw of the swamp; then Dan owould set one foot carefully upon the surface, only to feel the gentle suction of the thmuskeg, and to see his sole slowly subsides ting into the depths.

th There were hard spots everywhere, but anythey extended for a radius of only a foot theor two, as Dan's experiments with the iskestones proved; they were tiny islands that is as a had hardened, with soft mire on every side theorether. Not in that way was he likely to

as afind a passage over the muck.

as He returned at noon, to find La Rue onledeep in one of the philosophical volumes that he had placed in his hands. The capthirtive looked up with a grin.

"Solved your problem, Keane?" he jeered.

Dan said nothing, but began the preparation of the meal—stewed rabbit, from the half dozen frozen carcasses that were hanging behind the stove.

"It's getting you the same way it got Lafontaine," La Rue observed, closing the book with his manacled hands. "Lafontaine was sure he couldn't be beaten by the muskeg. He was going to find a quick way out. Just a matter of a day or so, he claimed. He started throwing rocks into the swamp, at intervals of a yard or two. Your method anything along those lines, Sergeant?"

Dan, looking into the sneering face, saw absolute confidence there, the ruthlessness

of power.

"Of course, the poor devil was sick with scurvy," La Rue continued. "After the first week it began to get on his nerves. And then the rabbits started bothering him. But that last week, before Jehane got him, he was a wreck. Screamed when I showed him a rabbit I'd caught in the wire. I guess when he looked into the muzzle of Jehane's revolver he was rather glad to go than not."

It was evident that La Rue was an artist

in diabolism.

"But you don't go that way, Keane," added Dan's tormentor. "Do you know what I'm going to do to you? I'm going to make a rabbit of you."

"In the meanwhile," said Dan, "the chow's ready." He unfastened La Rue's

handcuffs, and they ate.

He invited his prisoner to take some exercise in the afternoon, but La Rue de-

clined, grinning.

"Don't want to interfere with your work, Sergeant," he answered. "It would spoil the afternoon for you, keeping one eye on the muskeg and the other on me. You see, you'd be watching my expression when you got 'hot' and 'cold,' trying to read how near you were to the jumping off spot. No, I'll read."

Dan spent the rest of the afternoon in the same attempt, without better success. That night, for some obscure reason of his own, La Rue persisted in talking about

Lafontaine.

"Haven't probed for the bullet yet, have you, Keane?" he asked. "That's important, you know. You'll find it somewhere near the other side of the head, I guess. Lafontaine's skull was thick, or it would have sone through. Once you've matched it up with the revolver, you'll have some first-rate evidence to convict. The gun you've got's the one Jehane shot him with."

He went on talking about Lafontaine. That night, lying awake, listening to the howling of the wolves again, and the scurrying of the rabbits, Dan could not keep his thoughts off the dead policeman.

He was not imaginative, but he could picture vividly Lafontaine's last days on the island, when, sick with scurvy, helplessly trapped, and knowing that the end was imminent, he had lain awake listening to the pattering of the rabbits and the howling of the wolves.

ND the thought that Jehane La Rue had been waiting for the end, waiting to steal in upon him with the cowardly revolver shot aroused in him a loathing of the girl that transcended the loathing he felt for La Rue.

Her beauty, her seeming innocence were the mask of a devil. She had spared him only to torture him as Lafontaine had been

tortured

On the following afternoon he began to despair of finding the solution that had baffled Lafontaine. It was he, the captor, who was the prisoner, and not La Rue. He knew that he was going the way Lafontaine had gone.

And he could see, from the quizzical, sneering glances that La Rue gave him

that La Rue knew.

More than once there came to him the temptation to shoot his prisoner and remove at least one of the factors in the situation. It was a temptation that would not even have entered his mind under other circumstances. Now, though he put it aside each time, each time it returned in undiminished strength.

At sunset, after the meal, he handcuffed and roped La Rue again and went to see

Lafontaine's body.

AFONTAINE lay, unchanged upon the stretcher cot behind the fringe of stalactites, which, no longer illumined by the rays of the sun, looked like a fringe of icicles. Bending over the dead man, Dan tried to read his face.

What had been the little corporal's thoughts during those last moments when he looked into the revolver of Jehane La

Rue? Despair, at the thought that his sion had failed, or satisfaction that he ridden upon the last patrol? Lafonta face was perfectly impassive; Dan a pread nothing there.

Dan wondered where Jehane had he be ped him. Surely she could not have note tained entrance to the store by night, second

all its locks and bars!

He bent over the body and examine the wound. It was just behind the left mb and Dan had seen it only by the me sud accident when he looked upon the body or if fore. He wondered how long La rour would have been able to keep up the interprise ception if he had not seen that small, coffully washed orifice under the hair. The wondered, too, as he had often wonder what had been La Rue's purpose in present and had not simply taken the opportunity miget away during the period that idic elapsed since Lafontaine's death.

And this seemed linked up in some He with Jehane's presence at the chatome Surely they two could have got away Destead of planning the impersonation was

was bound to fail in the end.

Again Dan felt that there was some nd, tor in the situation which, when explaints would throw a fresh light on everything

It was beginning to grow dark. B rose from beside Lafontaine. He was women dering what it would be best to do, ilega did succeed in thwarting the La Rue pess He could not take in the woman as lang as the man-nor the body of the dead oiled poral, in the absence of a sleigh. The H course would be to rush La Rue oven the the Mackenzie by forced marches, ars then return. He'd sweat some of that the il's philosophy out of the fellow, hou thought with a grim smile. And even ifo d couldn't find the road, there was alwaed the prospect of weather cold enough la freeze the muskeg. After all, Lafontaf had got in in just that way, accordinging La Rue's story, and La Rue would he T had no particular purpose in lying on tve point.

As Dan rose, his eyes fell upon the ear posite wall of the rock vault. On the consion of his former visit, with the sur throwing prismatic hues over the wall a stalactites, he had not seen it clearly, but now, in the pearly opalescence of beganing twilight, the whole interior of the cave was illumined with a diffused range

his ice. The wall beyond the stalactites was the amed with fissures, like the outside.

PPROACHING it, Dan saw that one of them was large enough to admit be body of a man. Peering through, he avencied that he could see the outlines of

ht, second large chamber.

There would be nothing unusual in this, ram, r every limestone formation is honey-left mbed with crevices and caverns, but of mt sudden Dan's suspicions were awakened. Odyor in the limestone dust that strewed the around, he could see what looked like the

the int imprints of human feet.

Il, c Of this he could not be sure. But, it queezing his body through the crevice, and an found that his belief had been correct. In F He was standing in a second chamber, wh hose dimensions it was impossible to denity rmine, but the air was fresh enough to at adicate that it was at least as large as an eouter one.

hatomething soft and furry swept his face.

way Dan leaped back. His first impression was that he had stumbled into the den of hibernating bear. But no sound followed, mend, after a moment, he advanced again, blaimtting out his hand. Again he felt that

ingurry object.

I But this was no bear. It was the skin of as wome large animal; and now, as Dan's eyes it igan to grow accustomed to the darket pess, he could see that other skins were as anging from the roof of the vault, or

ad oiled up about him on shelves.

the He advanced cautiously, until he stood over the centre of the chamber. There were so, are on every side of him; he could see at the dimensions of the room now, and, we, hough it was too dark for him to be able in its distinguish one fur from another, he realized that he was in a storehouse containing agh larger number of furs than ever came out intaf any single district of the north in a lingingle season.

h They were piled high to the roof on tvery side of him, packed close together in ales, some of them the rough, half-prethe ared skins, others soft as if they were con exhibition in the rooms of some great

e sur company.

Il a And Dan knew at once what he had y, bund. It was the store of furs stolen by bega Rue and his gang from the warehouse of the murdered factor at White's Landrang, and traded from the Indians for cheap

hooch, or taken in the course of the outlaw's bloody raids through the northland.

This was the eache for which the Police had been seeking in vain ever since the first

patrol got on La Rue's trail.

And with that a good deal of the mystery was cleared up. La Rue had waited simply because, to have fled would have been to leave the furs behind. Whereas, by impersonating Lafontaine, had he succeeded, he could have sent Dan south in the belief that his errand had been accomplished.

The pursuit would have been called off, and La Rue would have found himself with leisure and liberty to transport the furs by degrees to points where they could enter

the regular market.

Dan wondered if Lafontaine had also found the store.

He turned toward the exit, encouraged wonderfully by this discovery. All that remained now was to find the way across the muskeg. On the morrow he would renew his attempt. There was one spot where the ground seemed fairly firm.

A sound behind him startled him. He turned. Out of the darkness a form came leaping forward. Before Dan could get his revolver from his holster it was upon him.

A pistol spat.

Next instant Dan was struggling in the grip of two men, and, taken unawares, he found himself helpless. He was borne to the ground, a pile of furs tumbling down upon him.

He struggled desperately, but unavailingly. And out of the obscurity he heard the voice of Jehane La Rue, screaming, "Don't shoot! You swore

that you would not shoot!"

With a last desperate effort Dan shook off his assailants and fought himself free. As he rose to his feet a pistol butt descended upon his head, half stunning him. He reeled—and then he saw the face of the girl peering at him out of the shadows of the interior.

At the sight of her face, framed against the darkness, his mad fury brought back his ebbing senses. He staggered toward her, shouting incoherently. He saw the terror in her eyes.

And then, abruptly as in a moving picture show, the girl's face vanished. He did not feel the second blow from behind; abruptly everything went out, and, groping through the darkness, Dan collapsed in unconsciousness at the girl's feet.

CHAPTER XI

OR a long time Dan must have been conscious of the interior of the trading store and the voices of the men without realizing it. Suddenly sight and sound were linked up within his brain. He discovered that he was lying on his camp bed again, with his eyes open, staring at the three men who were grouped about the table.

They were playing with a pack of cards in the light of the oil lamp overhead. Each of the three had a bottle of whisky and a mug beside him, and they were shouting as they slapped down the cards, and quarrel-

ing vociferously.

One of the three was La Rue; the two others looked like typical breeds, but they were both men of enormous strength and herculean build, with bestial faces—the kind of human wolf the north turns out once in a while among her clean-limbed, simple men and women.

Dan turned his examination upon him-He quickly discovered that he was bound fast, in the same way as that in which he had bound La Rue. Not yet fully himself, he must have uttered a groan, for La Rue glanced at him, jumped up, and flung the cards down on the table.

"Diable, he's awake!" he shouted in sardonic mirth. "I thought you'd put him out for good, Lachance. His head's almost as

hard as Corporal Lafontaine's!"

He advanced to Dan's side, followed by the two others. They were both mumbling, staggering drunk, but La Rue seemed sober enough to walk, to talk and gibe at his

prisoner.

"Well, Sergeant, we've turned the tables, hey?" he grinned. "They don't teach you psychology in the Police, do they? If they did, you might have known I was talking about Lafontaine so as to inspire you with the idea of taking another look at him. Lachance and Sirois had been waiting there all day for you to step inside. It was going to be difficult to get you in the store at night. But I laid the trap, and you walked into it."

He grinned broadly, and Lachance and Sirois broke into roars of bestial laughter.

"I wanted to give you a longer run for your money, Sergeant," La Rue continued. "I wanted to trace the result of environment, and I wanted to see if you'd run true to form. Then there was the rabbits. They were beginning to get on your nerves,

Sergeant. I wanted to hear you year for help against the rabbits in your sire

the way Lafontaine did.

"But Jehane wanted to hurry malu up. She's got her knife into you, Serg She wouldn't let you die the word She wouldn't let you die the way Laur taine died. We'd talked it over and be son what's going to happen to you. going to turn you into a rabbit, Serget You've only got yourself to blame, us know, you walked straight into it. him a drink, Lachance; he'll need it tay

Lachance, staggering to the table, pol out a mugful of the whisky, and broughas to Dan. He held it to his lips. Dan tuyon his head aside, and Lachance dashed contents of the mug into his face, shou

with laughter.

"You're not a good sport, Sergeant, he "Light a cigarnir afraid," said La Rue.

for him, Lachance."

Lachance lit a cigarette from the fa lips. Dan spat it out; it dropped uponhe bared throat and lay there. Dan would fre wince, though the pain of the scorchin flesh was agony.

La Rue, who missed nothing, bent over Dan, grinning as he peered into his figi

"Stoic, hey?" he jeered, picking up a cigarette, and pressing the lighted end in Dan's chest. "This is only the least tabe of what's coming to you, Mister Rabiha Stoic, are you?"

With a sudden loosening of bestial fin he dashed his fists into Dan's face.

he Suddenly the door of the store flew op m A storm was rising, and a gust of snoal laden wind blew in. The lamp was burnip low, but through the obscurity Dan col see Jehane La Rue standing in the entranir her coat white.

Half fainting with pain, Dan was vaguit aware that his tormentors had left him e join the girl. He heard them bawling, ah above it all Jehane's voice raised in a h rible, shrill crescendo of maniacal mirth a

Then she was at his side, looking do b at him, a mug of whisky in her hand. De would hardly have known her for the g s whom he had talked to in the tent and the chateau. Her face was like a devil's wis the insane malice, hate and triumph. A she began cursing Dan in a French pato i waving her arms, and shrieking like an il sane woman, as she undoubtedly was.

The more she raved, the louder the thres

u yenen bellowed. La Rue was drunk now, like our sirois and Lachance. But when the girl nsheathed a knife and made as if to Seer lunge it into Dan, he intervened.

Serg "No, no, ma belle, we don't want to skin y Liur rabbit before he's ready for the pot," and le shouted, catching the girl by the arm.

With a curse, Jehane drove the weapon

Sergit La Rue's throat. He caught her wrist me, ust as the point was touching him, and t. ave her a backhanded blow that sent her d it taggering, while the three rocked and

nowled with laughter.

po Jehane rose to her feet, replacing the ouglagger in her belt. "Oui, oui, mon chéri, n tuyou are right," she answered more quietly.

shou At a word from La Rue, Lachance and Sirois seized Dan by the head and feet and, ant, he rope being unfastened, began carrying

rigarnim out of the store.

HAT diabolical scheme La Rue had in mind he could not conjecture, and ponhe hardly cared. He was still in agony ould from the blows he had received on the head orchin the fur store; and the sight of Jehane had inspired him with a loathing of his nt overy life. Murderess as he had known the is figirl to be, he had seen something in herup a fugitive glimpse of something that had nd inspired and almost ennobled him. It had st tabeen in the tent, that first night when he

Rab had saved her from the blizzard. And again in the chateau. Ruined and desolate as the al finterior had been, Dan, unimaginative as he was, had seen a picture of her there, the opmistress of an old seigniory. How well sno adapted she had seemed to be to such a

urn part!

And now—to have seen the picture fade tran into that of an insane, foul-mouthed harridan was unbearable. It shook Dan's soul, aguit filled him with despair that made whatnim ever torture La Rue meant to inflict upon

g, a him meaningless.

a he And she was still at his side as Lachance rth and Sirois carried him, shrieking and gibdo bering at him, while the gale increased Devery moment, blowing great clouds of e g snow across the island and bending the d branches of the trees in a discordant wi symphony.

A A rabbit screamed somewhere—caught ato in one of the wires, probably, and Dan in heard La Rue's wild bellow of laughter behind him. "Eh, mon gars, you will be the screaming like that soon," he shouted.

Did they mean to strangle him with a wire? Dan viewed this possibility with the same lack of interest. He was very tired, and the pain in his head had become a uniform and steady throbbing, each pulsation of which was like the thrust of a knife into his brain. He had often contemplated death without undue emotion, had wondered in what guise it would come to him; but now, face to face with it, he was only conscious of a faint desire to have the whole troublesome business finished.

But suddenly Dan awoke to a new interest in the situation. They were carrying him off the island on to the muskeg. Even in that predicament his professional zeal, probably the deepest grounded of his acquirement, came to the fore. They were showing him the secret route over the swamp, and, though there was hardly the remotest chance that he would ever live to use that route, he could not help being in-

terested.

And he peered out through the driving sleet, trying to discover the secret.

They seemed to know the route thoroughly, without hesitation; nobody spoke or asked another anything about that subject. Lachance, holding Dan's legs and feet, was moving forward, Sirois following with his head and shoulders, La Rue bringing up the rear, and the madwoman stalking beside, muttering imprecations.

And of a sudden Dan understood the route, and why Lachance could lead the way without hesitation.

ACHANCE was stepping in a straight Ine from one to another of the dwarf willows, little more than shrubs, that dotted the muskeg. Dan had known that the muskeg was not uniform; it consisted rather of a succession of small hummocks. with the unfathomed mire between them. And now the secret was revealed, and it was its very simplicity that had baffled Dan, as it had baffled Lafontaine.

The willows grew only where there was firm soil for their roots to take hold of. They could not grow with their roots loose in the drifting muskeg. And Lachance was stepping from willow to willow, from one firm patch to the next, until the island lay two hundred yards behind them.

It was invisible in the snow cloud that wrapped them about. The wind was mounting to a gale almost as violent as the one

in which Dan had saved Jehane's life. La Rue shouted above the wind:

"That will do! This place will do! Stake

him out here!"

Next moment Dan was deposited upon the ground. With an oath, Sirois jerked him to his feet, and unfastening a length of the rope with which he was bound, began dragging him toward a small tree that emerged out of the snow.

with Lachance, bellowing laughter, grasped Dan about the body and held him against the gnarled, wind-beaten stump,

while Sirois adjusted the rope.

Were they going to hang him? That was Dan's first thought. But the tree was too small, too low, moreover, they were making him fast to the trunk of it, swathing him like a mummy with the coils of rope.

His ankles were firmly knotted, thence the rope wound up his legs to his waist, which was tightly compressed by the coil; again the rope strands passed about his chest and shoulders, and, lastly, about his neck, leaving him no more than a few inches' leeway.

"Leave him his hands," bellowed La Rue -and Jehane burst into a peal of hideous laughter. "He'll need those. Damn this

storm! I'd like to see the fun!"

Lachance and Sirois stepped back, and La Rue planted himself in front of Dan. "Eh, mon gars, how do you feel now, Mister Policeman?" he inquired.

Dan looked steadily at the outlaw, but

did not answer.

"You know now, hein?" grinned La Rue. "It was what I should have done to Lafontaine, only I did not think of it. You know now how the rabbit feels when he is in the

grip of the wolf's teeth, hein?"

In his bestial blood fury La Rue had lost his veneer of cultivated speech. He had become pure hunter, the most primitive of men, rising to the heights of the utmost nobility and sacrifice, and dropping to the depths. And La Rue had plumbed those depths of his own nature often enough.

But Dan was beginning to understand. And, reckless of death though he was, that death—the thought of it sent an involuntary shudder through him, though he controlled himself well enough to keep it from La Rue's perception.

"Yes, Sergeant," said La Rue, mimicking a child's voice, "you are the rabbit now. Tonight the wolves are very hungry, for the rabbits stay in their burrows because of

the storm. So they come creeping up terms they smell man-rabbit, and they get led grier, they begin to sniff. Then one sprad d and takes a bite, and the taste of huight. blood, it drives them mad. And then oint. fight with your free hands, mon gal La diable, what a battle. It is a pity no one can stay to see this night, for the wour ga are timid. But in the morning we find ver t bones of our rabbit-hein, Mister Politippi man?"

With a final touch of brutality he kicaggi Dan savagely in the stomach again te as again, until he hung in his ropes, doutends up with agony. But the last thing his h Dan heard was the madwoman's hide is an is la

oaths and insane laughter.

CHAPTER XII

He

Te c

o br OR a long time Dan hung there, livith in his ropes, sick to death, and in he o most complete unconsciousness of sume surroundings. DOW

Then slowly he began to revive. orea deathly nausea passed. The throbbing page A in his head was as if somebody was beathear a brazen bell, each stroke of which was islar companied by almost unbearable agoto h But between the strokes Dan began lievi come back to himself.

The tree to which he was fastened I hardly higher than he could reach with ago stretched arms, and felt little more thatfew sapling, but, dwarfed though it had all mained, it was probably thirty years old at 1 least, and the gnarled trunk was a mass the toughest fibre. Dan strained at it, and mu pliant willow yielded, so that he could be was it this way and that; but there was no p sibility of uprooting it.

And yet, hopeless as the situatihad seemed, Dan began to hope. Perhaps his was out of sheer despair, perhaps the lice action of a vigorous man to an impossibit situation; most likely of all, that dogg resolution of the scarlet coated riders the dis knows no defeat short of death.

The storm was worse than the one In had encountered on the journey northwar pa if that had been possible. It roared ov sel the muskeg, snapping branches from that trees, which groaned and creaked under i ra lashing; and on the wings of the storth came cold such as even the desolate tundra between the Bear and the Slave rare wi know. It was a cold compared with whical the ordinary winter cold is nothing. The

g up, ermometer outside the store had regisget red twenty-five below that afternoon; it ne sprad dropped out of the register by midof huight. It was seventy below the freezing

n ga La Rue's refinement of diabolism had not y no one to the extent of stripping Dan of his ne wour gauntlets, but as that bitter cold crept find ver the land Dan felt its numbing fingers er Polripping him, almost as if a hand had lutched him. It revived him, it called the ne kicagging nerves and senses to one final batgain le against his bonds, against the human doulends and beasts of prey. Numbed, with ing his hand like dead weights at the ends of hidelis arms, and his feet bloodless, Dan began is last fight.

He threw his weight against the tree. Ie clasped his arms about it and sought o break it off at the roots, till it was level re, livith the snow, now on one side, now on d in he other. But always the pliant willow res of sumed its stance. For thirty winters it had powed beneath the storms; it would not

break for man.

ng p Above the howling of the gale Dan could beathear the drunken shouts of the men on the was island. Snatches of roaring choruses came agoto his ears, cut off, renewed; the gang, began lieving themselves safe, were celebrating

La Rue's liberation.

ed He heard it, a mocking chorus to his ith agony, and he fought to free himself as thatfew men have fought before. He called on ad all those reserves of latent strength that lie oldat the summons of the will, putting forth hass the last ounce of them, exerting every nd tmuscle in the battle. And in the end he d bewas beaten.

op He acknowledged himself beaten. He had done all that man could do, and he uatihad neither broken the tree nor loosened aps his bonds. The frozen rope was a chain of he lice, inflexible as steel, and, like steel, it had ossibitten deep gashes in his legs and arms.

ogg Then through the gale Dan heard the s th distant howling of the wolf pack. And over the snow the patter of the rabbits began. ne Invisible, lithe little forms were darting war past on either side of him. One hurled itov self in panic against him, rebounding like n tha stone. The patter was continuous as the er i rain; and louder across the muskeg sounded stor the howls of the hunting pack.

Then a gaunt form broke through the are willows within a few yards of Dan, leaped whice almost to his feet, and recoiled, snarling.

The Dan, who had ceased to struggle,

slumped forward in his ropes, drawing in great gulps of air. He was at the end of his resources, and almost incapable of movement.

He had heard varying stories as to the ferocity of timber wolves. Some said that, when sufficiently famished, they would not hesitate to attack man; others that they never attacked a human being. He knew that it is the degree of hunger that counts; wolves, when their stomachs have been empty long enough, will attack anythinga party of men, if they are emboldened by the presence of the pack.

Dan peered out through the driving snow, but he could see only two or three feet in front of him-the outlines of the little willows on the muskeg, merging into the darkness. Yet, as he strained his eyes, he seemed to see shadows moving in that darkness-lean, stealthy forms, beginning to circle him, but so faint that he could not be sure whether he actually saw anything.

INUTES passed. Through the gale he could still hear the drunken yells of the three outlaws on the island. He was slowly gathering fresh strength for the fight which he knew to be inevitable—the last fight. He would go down fighting. It should be mercifully short, once the attack

And it came as Dan had anticipated that it would come. Without a sound, without the slightest warning, a shape launched itself out of the shadows, straight toward Dan's throat.

It overleaped him and missed, and with that the fury of the primal man was unleashed in Dan. He had thought he would go down in a grim, silent struggle; instead, a cry of which he was not conscious broke from his throat, and, stark against the tree,

he braced himself for battle.

The hell's scum on the island heard that cry above the howl of the wind. A roar of mirth came from La Rue; he staggered up from the table at which he and the other two were seated.

"They've got him!" he shrieked. "Did you hear that, Sirois? They're tearing him! Listen, listen! Rabbit pie out on the muskeg! God, I'd give ten years of my life to see it! I'm going!"

"Don't be a fool, Alphonse! They'll get you, too," mumbled Sirois, leaning, glassy eyed, across the table. Lachance was sprawling with his head among the cards,

clutching the money that he had won.

La Rue went to the door and opened it. He fell back as a cloud of snow came burst-

ing in, and slammed it again.

"God, what a night! I guess they've got him by this time," he muttered. "Hey, Lachance! Wake up!" He shook the half conscious man until he sat up, scowling and muttering. "The night ain't over yet. Shuffle the deck. I'm going to win back what you won-damn you, d'you hear me?"

S THE wolf leaped again, Dan's fist a caught it full in the slavering jaws. The impact of the beast, this time against Dan's breast, bent the tree almost to the ground, and carried Dan with it, but the wolf, momentarily dazed by the blow, rolled undermost. It retreated, snarling, and as Dan, jerked back upon his feet by the rebounding of the willow, awaited the onset of the pack, two forms broke through the snow spume. Before Dan had quite understood what was happening, one of them was slashing at the ropes that bound him.

They parted, and then, numbed, incredulous, Dan found himself face to face with

the girl and the Indian, Louis.

It was too incredible to be true. For a moment Dan lost touch altogether with reality; then the thought came to him that the girl had been playing a part in the store, in order to help him. But there was no time for speculation. Louis was thrusting a long knife into his hands.

"Quick, Monsieur, this way!" he gasped. "Don't touch your skin to the blade, or

you will lose it!"

He turned to run, tugging at the girl's arm, and as Dan stumbled in their wake another of the shadows leaped, and then another and another. In another moment the three were beset by the maddened pack. Dan thrust and hacked, dealing furious slashes, as did the Indian. They tumbled in a bloody welter on the snow. Dan felt teeth meet in his shoulder through his mackinaw, and, maddened with the pain, he drove the knife upward clear through the furry throat, pulled it free, and rose from beneath the carcass of the dying beast.

Louis was struggling with two more of the wolves. Dan saw the knife thrust of the Indian rip through the hide along the whole length of the belly. The second beast leaped for the Indian's throat. Before the jaws could close, Dan had struck home.

They were free. Dan and the Indian ke I the girl by either arm, supporting ack a face the menacing pack, ran on again. bwl o dying wolves were already being asunder, but others of the pack were following ing the fugitives, leaping short, cowe easts back into the night, but always follow Hol It was a fight against shadows, for ered they could see nothing, and again a i froi would leap, and vanish again; it was p the way the wolves tired out the caribou, letely separated the fawns from the herd. suddenly the girl uttered a scream, swinging around, Dan saw three shad crouching, as if to leap, upon their otagge

He forestalled them, running forwn a shouting. The shadows vanished, buthen the same moment there rang out a piern the cry from Louis, and then a scream of agout o

Dan ran to his side—too late. The man had slipped on the snow, and half emer pack was snarling over his remains. Be oom Dan reached his side the Indian had become

rent literally limb from limb.

His rush sent the wolves scurrying baaint and, sick with horror, Dan bent over wind 1 had been Louis. But again the screamed, almost at his side, and as I turned a huge gray shape shot past h the blow of the glancing body sending girl staggering into Dan's arms. Had eit fallen, it would have been the end. Dan kept his feet, and as he backed pack again hurled themselves upon the dian's body, and the hideous howl of Dan umph rose into the air.

Momentarily the two were unassailed, ne w the whole pack was snarling over the jed mains, and Dan, holding the girl, bachad toward the fringe of brush which, loomorise up in the darknes, told him that they crossed the muskeg, and were almost up for the firm ground at the edge of the must hat lake. He turned and ran with her; turnain again, peering into the shadows and gimp ing around him; turned and ran once monis Now they were rounding the lake's ed D and the girl went limp in Dan's hold.

"We're safe!" she gasped. "They-nethat

come—this side of the lake."

And she collapsed, a dead weight in side

Dan lifted her—his own arms were nul A almost to the shoulder, and carried her crea the slope toward the old chateau. time to time he halted and looked back, b

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dian ey were no longer followed. Beyond the ke Dan could hear the snarling of the ack as they fought over their prey; it in. bwl of triumph, first from one throat and rible of all the sounds made by the

Owe easts that kill.

Holding the girl close to him, Dan stagered on. He was on the plateau now, and a front of him, through the trees, loomed p the outlines of the chateau. It was comletely dark. Dan felt as if his strength rould just suffice him to the door. If it

had But it swung open to his push, and he taggered in, clasping the girl's unconscious ody still more closely. He staggered in orwn a furious gust of wind and snow, and buthen the warmth of the stove, still burning iern the big hall, came to him like the sun age ut of heaven.

Dan stumbled down the long room. He all emembered that there was a lounge in the Be oom beyond, on the right of the door. A d becond stove was burning in the further oom, its light, reflected through the chinks, banitly illumining it. Dan found the lounge and laid the girl down on it; and then he oppled over on the floor at her feet, and tnew nothing more.

CHAPTER XIII

HE agony of the returning circulation roused him. Every inch of his body ached with a thousand tortures. of Dan groaned, stirred, opened his eyes, and ooked about him, without knowing where d, ne was. For the moment his memory carne ried him forward only to the time when he achad been upon the island, with La Rue his

Then a clock somewhere chimed the hour that his senses became coördinated, and the pain in his hands and feet, which had been glimpersonal, attached itself more deeply to

mohis consciousness.

Dan groaned again. Then he felt his hands being rubbed briskly, and realized neithat he was lying upon the lounge in the chateau, and that the girl was kneeling beside him, working over him in the light of a single candle.

As consciousness revived, the pain in-

creased. He felt racked in every sinew and muscle of his body. The pain of the returning blood flow was almost unendurable, but in addition to that his head was throbbing as if it was about to split, and there was a burning numbness in his left shoulder, which felt as if it was bandaged.

Dan's eyes, wandering downward, fell upon his clothes. His mackinaw had been removed, and his shirt was stiff with dried

blood. Dan remembered.

He remembered, but he was too weak to feel much horror at that remembrance, though again he saw the snarling jaws about him, and Louis, rent and dismembered almost in an instant. He watched the girl through half closed eyelids as she tended him. How strong and capable her face looked, as she worked, massaging his wrists and ankles alternately, with steady, untiring strokes. Was that the madwoman who had screamed blasphemies at him in the store on the island?

Once more life and death had been tossed to and fro between them, and again he owed his life to her, to La Rue's wife, the murderess, who must hang upon a gibbet in

some prison yard!

Suddenly the girl, as if conscious that she was being watched, shot a swift glance upward, and met Dan's eyes. She withdrew her hands.

"Now you will be all right, Sergeant Keane," she said, looking at him with an inscrutable expression in her eyes.

"How long have you been working over

me?" asked Dan.

"About two hours. It was exhaustion, I think, more than the cold."

Two hours, after her own exposure, after the horrors of the night! Dan did not know what to say. But now he began to be aware that he had not been altogether unconscious after all. Even while he lay in a torpor he had somehow been aware of the passage of time, of the girl's lifting him upon the couch and tending him, and of a screaming somewhere—over on the island -shrill, prolonged and horrible.

"I think you will be able to walk after a little. I bandaged your shoulder. was only a small flesh wound there." She shuddered, and caught at the frame of the couch, as if about to faint. For an instant her body went limp and her eyes closed;

then she recovered herself.

"Sergeant Keane, I have something to say to you," she went on with swift eagerness. "I am going to offer to surrender myself to you. I will pledge you my word of honor to make no attempt to escape if you will accept it. Place me on parole, so that I can look after you until you are stronger. In your present state you are in no condition to think of arresting my-my husband. Besides, I should never again take you across the muskeg. Place me on parole,

AN continued to watch her. This was not the language of a vicious murderess; the girl's manner, her looks, her whole demeanor were inconsistent with those of the woman who had screamed at him so venomously upon the island—who had trapped him in the fur cache.

"You can't take us both in at the same time," the girl went on, twisting and un-"So take twisting her fingers nervously. me, and leave my husband. I don't want my freedom now, or my life either. I want

to end-everything."

Still Dan said nothing, and she went on,

with still more feverish eagerness.

"We are safe here until it grows light. That gives us four hours' start. They suppose that you-died-out on the muskeg. In four hours we can throw them off our trail completely. I want to take you to a place I know of. It is a little cabin, hidden in a belt of forest a few miles away. Poor Louis built it for me secretly once, a year or two ago, so that if ever I-found that my life had grown intolerable-I could go there and be free."

She was speaking now with desperate eagerness. "I want you to let me take you there until you have recovered," she went "You see, it is impossible for you to find the way across the muskeg, you are unarmed, and as soon as the storm ceases and it grows light they will discover what has happened, and then they will come here and murder you. You are no match for the three of them, weak and unarmed. Come with me, and I will hide you there, and then, when you are well, you shall take me back to the police post with my own sleigh and the dogs. They are at Louis' cabin, a quarter of a mile away. Come with me!"

The words flowed from her lips with a certain incoherence; it was the babbling of a soul at its last extremity. And as Dan watched her a light began to break for him.

"You wish to surrender yourself, Madame La Rue?" he asked. "You offer your free surrender, provided I take you in first, and then return for your husband?"

"Yes, yes," she panted. "It was I kil not Corporal Anderson. I will write out father You might as morth complete confession. take me first, since you cannot take ward both together.

Dan sat up with an effort. He wous feeling better now, stronger, though ewarres nerve was a little center of individual pathou

"I am not deceived any longer," he she we quietly. "You are not Jehane La R term You are not the woman who tried to woul me in my tent, nor are you the woman wour trapped me in the fur cache. Who are yo ever

"I don't know what you mean!" cr serte the girl wildly. "Who else could I belissue Jehane La Rue? Didn't I try to kill you twice, and then repented, because couldn't bring myself to-?"

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"No," answered Dan. "No, you could

act well enough for that. And so I this it would be best to tell me the tru Mademoiselle Desmoulins!"

She started back, staring at him in par one hand clutched to her breast.

know my name—"

"Louis called you Mademoiselle Cami Your surname I got from La Rue, man you quite impossibly tried to prete was your husband. I knew that could be true. Come, Mademoiselle, it is usele to try to deceive me any longer. not Jehane La Rue. In consequence, have nothing to gain by pretending to that person any longer. I know, of cour that she is your sister. The resemblance too close for her to be anything else. me the truth!"

For a moment or two the girl continu looking at Dan, clasping and unclasping hands with agitated movements. surrendered.

"I'll tell you the truth, then," she an wered. "There's nothing else to do."

"Tell me all," said Dan. "I think th will be the best."

I'II tell you everything as quickly as wh can. Well, my father was Artu Desmoulins. He was in the fur trade. had built up a business rivaling that of t ren big companies, by just dealings. He spe res half the year up here, and the rest Montreal, where we had our home as ch bro dren.

"Mother was dead, and we were at bee school half the year, but we always look lov forward to my father's return. We wo and shipped him, Jehane and I.

"One day—I was a child then, and did kil not understand what it all meant-my out father told us that he was going into the north and would never come back. After-ke ward I knew what had happened. His business had been destroyed by unscrupule ous rivals; there was a warrant for his evarrest on the charge of extensive frauds, though I knew that he was innocent, for es he was the soul of honor. But he faced a R term of years in prison, and he knew it would mean his death, and he feared for n wour future. We were only children, and everything was gone. All our friends decr serted us, and a warrant had already been be issued for his arrest.

"He was the subject of universal execration, for the shares of the company that he had formed had gone down to nothing, and hundreds of poor people who had invested their money in it because they betru lieved in him had lost everything. that was the one thing he could not bear.

"He knew this district, and he knew that at certain seasons certain fur-bearing animals fled here from the wolves and other beasts that preyed on them. He believed that he could grow rich in a few years, and repay everything he owed. So he built this château, and the cabin on the island, which was not an island then. Later an arm of the muskeg river flowed around it on this side and cut it off.

"Here I grew up. My father taught me, and I taught Jehane, my little sister. nce venture prospered, and little by little the furs that my father sent out became known for their richness. Little by little all those who had trusted my father were repaid with interest, and the warrant for his arrest was withdrawn. Before he died, we ar owed nothing!"

oun

She spoke proudly, with flashing eyes, th and Dan forgot his own pain in wondering at her pride and courage.

"And always the talk was of the day as when we should return. But we had all rtt come to look upon this as our home. Only I little Jehane, who had been too young to ft remember very much of Montreal, was pe restless and dissatisfied.

"Then came the day when Louis ch brought by father home. He had carried him ten miles on his back. My father had at been crushed by a falling tree while folok lowing his trap line. His spine was broken, we and he had lain for two days and nights in the bitter cold. Only his intense vitality had saved him.

"He might have lived, a cripple, but it was the cold that killed him. The frozen limbs gangrened, and there was no hope of saving him. Before he died he called me to his side and made me swear that I would always watch over little Jehane.

"He was in great distress about her, for he knew what was in her mind, and he was afraid for her. I told him that I would give my life for her, if necessary. And I meant to fulfill that promise, if ever the time came."

CHE seemed to have forgotten Dan's presence; the confession had become a monologue, the outpouring of the inpent emotions of years.

"It came after Alphonse La Rue came to the château, seeking refuge one stormy night. He was a newcomer in the district, and we had never seen him before, but he was almost the first white man Jehane had ever seen since she was a child, except

an occasional missionary or trader.

"I read everything, Jehane's infatua-tion, and Alphonse La Rue's cold, deliberate calculations. After he had gone, saying that he would be back before the summer, I told Jehane that we would go back to Montreal. We had a little money put by, enough to have kept us for a year or two. And always Jehane had been urging me and always I had begged her to wait a little longer, for Louis was working for us, and slowly the money was accumulating.

"Now she refused. She had changed. Alphonse La Rue had possessed her very soul, as he had done ever since. I will be as quick as I can, Monsieur," the girl went on, as if becoming conscious of Dan again. "Long before the summer he was back, and he stayed, and went, and stayed. part of the story is our own inviolable

secret, Jehan's and mine.

"But I succeeded in forcing him to marry her at the mission on the Great They came back here. He stepped into my father's shoes. Little by little I discovered what kind of a man he wasworse than I had feared. Then he brought his men here, outlaws who had joined him, and this became their headquarters.

"Often I begged Jehane to come with me and let us escape together, and she would agree, for she was desperately unhappy, but as soon as La Rue returned, she fell into his power again.

"After her child was born dead, it seemed as if a devil had taken possession of her. And then-I cannot tell you, butshe committed a crime that put her outside the vale of the law. But it was he-Alphonse La Rue, who had played upon her weak nature until he had made her morally his slave.

"The rest is quickly told. They were hunted from place to place, and at last came back here for refuge. I knew my sister's hands were stained with blood. knew that Corporal Lafontaine was on his way to arrest Alphonse, and that those two had laid their plans to kill him. They suspected my intentions, and I was kept a prisoner till-it was done.

"I had managed to get Lafontaine's last message to headquarters sent out through Louis, but I could get no warning to Lafontaine himself, and Louis had no opportunity of speaking to him. Then, when it became known that you were coming, I went down to meet you. When I couldn't turn you from your purpose, and I discovered that you had a warrant for Jehane's arrest, I-I called in Sirois and Lachance. They had been waiting near, to help remove the furs as soon as you were dead. They swore, and Alphonse swore that you should not be hurt. But they lied to me. Then I thought that perhaps I might take my sister's place, and die for her, in memory of my dead father, and my promise to him-"

CHAPTER XIV

HE tears came in a relieving flood, and Dan, sitting up on the couch. watched the girl, knowing that in all probability they had saved her reason. The clock chimed five. The candle was guttering low. Outside the gale was still raging, though Dan thought that its violence was abating. Whatever he did, he would have to do it quickly.

In a minute or two Camille had recovered her self possession. She turned to Dan. "And now you know all, Monsieur," she said. "I would have died for her, but, since it was of no use, I must put myself in your hands. I cannot go on any longer, and I know now that I was wrong in trying to save him from the consequences of his

After last night—it is better tf h crimes. he should die." ick

"Where is Jehane?" asked Dan.

Camille looked at him for a mon man with the old suspicion. "You are going take her, then? A mad woman whom hru law cannot hang? You have seen enoutte of her to know that her brain is garge It went after the birth of her child. W out him, she is powerless. Monsieur, I low of you, let me take you to that placoul told you of, till you are recovered. The was God help us all, you must do as you willind

"Where is Jehane?" asked Dan again, nov Camille seemed to collapse under the low sistent question. Dan saw that she had son! yet abandoned hope of saving her sisterneat

"Ah, you are terrible, you policement Hall the machines, merciless! Take the man d in God's name take the man, not the the man, who is mad-"

"You must tell me where Jehane chir said Dan again. "I do not know whawith shall do. First, where is she?" to c

"She is here, then!" Camille cried. "Here?" Dan glanced about him quipau For a moment he had thought that " hane was in the room with them.

"She is in the château—down belthe Louis and I locked her in the room whe I my father stored his furs after the musiced cut us off from the island. It is cold thehan but she has rugs and blankets, and wiflig could I do? She fought-ah, mon Diabl she is mad, I tell you! She came to bee with a revolver, telling me that you lani been thrown to the wolves, threatening istu hating me, this sister for whom I wo have given my life."

"I must see her."

"Monsier Keane, think, think, that first, I implore you! They will find tre and release her in the morning. She w suffer, but not as she would have made yage suffer. Monsieur, come with me. There ho no time to be lost-" ger

But Dan was already on his feet. found that he could stand, though frostbites were agonizing, and the throval bing in his head and shoulder seemint wh hardly to have decreased.

He did not yet know what course an meant to pursue, but it was in his mind lu accept Camille's proposal, since he cou Su not hope to cope with La Rue and his m till he grew stronger. In the meantime, would take Jehane with them.

He said nothing of this, he was not sure f himself. He motioned to the girl to ick up the candle and lead the way. After more moment of what seemed to indicate degoing lance, Camille obeyed, with a helpless how how the candle shoulders, and, picking up the uttering light, preceded Dan through the large room into another one behind it.

is garge room into another one behind it.

We This seemed to have been a kitchen, but ar, I tow it was quite empty, so far as Dan placould see by the flickering light. There Thewas a hole in the roof at the farther end, a will mod the floor lay three inches deep with again now there. Outside the wind was still the the the town of the bitter cold was in striking had contrast with the warmth of the stove-sister leated room in which they had been.

iceme Holding the candle high, Camille opened and door communicating with a passage, at the the end of which appeared a flight of wooden steps. The wind, whistling through the chinks in the log walls, which were stuffed whawith moss, almost blew out the light, Camille, shielding it with her hand, began to descend the steps. Half-way down she a quipaused and turned.

that "She is in here, Monsieur, fastened tightly," she said, pointing to the door at belthe bottom.

n who Dan hobbled down the stairs and premusiceded the girl, taking the candle from her d the hand. The heavy door at the bottom of the d wiflight was secured with an iron bar, probably to protest the furs that had once to been stored in the vault against human or ou lanimal marauders. Dan raised it. The colding stung his frostbitten hands.

Wol He pushed it back. "Madame La Rue!" he called.

But no answer came, and Camille, now that his side, looked at him in piteous enind treaty.

the w "Take care, Monsieur! If she has manade y aged to free herself—though I do not see how she could have done so—she is dangerous. She—"

She was looking in at Dan's side. The throwalt was a large one, damp and chill. At seem intervals wooden posts supported the roof, which was the floor of one of the rooms above. Camille took the candle from Dan and moved it slowly, so that its light illuminated different parts of the interior. Suddenly she uttered a cry, and lowered the candle slightly, pointing to one of the posts near by.

A THE foot of it a rope lay in a heap, showing where the prisoner had freed herself, either by slight of hand or by the strength of madness. And beyond it, at the further end of the vault, was an open door, showing where she had made her exit.

A gust of wind came through, making

the expiring candle flicker brightly.

Camille caught Dan by the arm. "Monsieur Keane, she must have freed herself. She has gone to the muskeg. Whether or not she knows that you were in the house, she will bring them back to wreak their vengeance on me for having bound her. They have long suspected that I wished to help you. We must start at once. We—"A violent gust of wind blew out the

A violent gust of wind blew out the candle. Dan half turned. Suddenly a scream broke from Camille's lips. With a violent movement she flung herself in front of Dan. She screamed again, and sank in a heap at the bottom of the stairs.

Simultaneously the shriek of the madwoman rang echoing through the thick and impenetrable darkness of the vault, a shriek of mockery that resounded from wall to wall as if a score of fiends had taken

up the chorus.

Dan did you know what had happened. He was almost unnerved by that hideous, ribald laughter, but he obeyed the impulse that came immediately into his mind. He leaped from Camille's side and pulled the door to, shutting the madwoman within. No matter if there was an exit at the other end, he was glad to have that door between them. He replaced the bar, picked Camille up in his arms, and made his way up the stairs, feeling his passage through the empty kitchen and back into the boudoir, where he laid her down on the couch.

He called to her, but she seemed in a dead faint, and helplessly in the dark Dan

began searching for a light.

Fortunately he had not far to search. Upon the little table beside the lounge he found a box of matches. Striking one, he saw another candle standing at his hand, and in another moment had it alight and had turned to Camille again.

She lay upon the lounge, her face waxen-white, and to Dan's horror he saw blood running down her dress from a cut

at the back of the shoulder.

He tore apart the woven mackinaw, and the material beneath, and saw that the blood was welling thickly from a gaping wound inflicted by the madwoman's knife. How deep it was there was no means of determining, but in the light of the candle Camille's lips looked blue, and she was gasping for breath.

Still, there was no blood upon her lips, and that gave Dan hope that the lung had not been pierced. But he knew that it was Camille's instinctive leap in front of him that had saved his own life. That slash of the knife of Jehane La Rue had been meant for him. She had freed herself from the ropes with which she was bound, and cunningly awaited them; perhaps she had stolen in upon them and listened to Camille's confession—perhaps she was even now stealing in on them again.

Dan reached out his foot and slammed the door between the boudoir and the hall. That shut off any unheralded approach save from the rear, and Jehane would have to cross the lighted room to reach him. He began with clumsy first-aid methods to try to stop the flow of blood.

AT FIRST it seemed as if it would never cease, as if the girl's life was ebbing away. Then slowly Dan began to get the upper hand. He bound the wound tightly with strips of cloth that he pulled from the rent in Camille's mackinaw, soft linen stuff he hated to despoil. And in the end she was lying back on the lounge, and the flow seemed to have been checked.

The little clock chimed half-past the hour of six, but there was still an hour and a half till dawn. The wind was going down, only fitfully did it shake the house or whistle about the eaves. The cold was in the room. Dan thrust on the last of the birch logs that were piled beside the stove. They would last two hours. And in the next two hours he meant to force the matter to its final issue.

There was a vessel of water in the kitchen, and Dan filled a cup that he found with the aid of a candle, and went back to the girl's side. He kneeled by her, looking into her face. It was so white, her lips so bloodless; she seemed hardly to breathe! And yet Dan was glad of the happenings of that night, taken all in all, for they had given him back the faith that he had lost. They had showed him loyalty and self-sacrifice of which he had not believed any woman capable. And there, beside Camille, Dan registered a vow that he would acquit

himself of the task before him, and her life as well.

Her lips moved, and he heard whisper his name. He tried to pour at own of the water between them, knowing thirst that follows so great a loss of blatt but barely succeeded. He looked at bandage, and found that the flow had restarted. And, standing beside the Dan fought the hardest and bitterest of his whole life.

He was going back, going back to muskeg, to try to find his way across willows. And he was going back uname to face three desperate men, trusting surprise and to such weapon as he musucceed in finding—a bough, an iron whatever came to his hand. He was go I back, frostbitten, wearier than he thought it possible for a man to be, will a splitting head and a shoulder maimed the teeth of a wolf. He was going be in obedience to the inexorable law of Force he served and worshiped.

He was going back, with hardly smallest hope that he would return. If we escaped the wolves, there was the must like the escaped the muskeg, there were three desperadoes. There was the moman, wandering from house to calcal and filled with a blind hate that mix vent itself on Camille while he was away.

He was going on his last mission, and if he failed to return, Camille would die

He knew that, and because the law of the Police requires that everything subordinated to her service, he did flinch from the issue.

He looked once more at the unconscipal girl. She was lying back on the low white and still. And he felt the strength of the sacrifice flow into his soul and fill

Turning, Dan put out the candle, all with firm steps, made his way through the boudoir, through the hall, and to the dw of the château.

Dan pushed to the front door and step out into the storm. The wind was showing hard, but the snow had almost ceased, and the cold was still increased. Dan had never known such cold in all experience of the north. It acted as tonic, but he knew that he must find patch across the muskeg quickly, or would perish in the snow.

Suddenly, as he left the château, to screams of Jehane La Rue rang out aga Three times that piercing shriek card

er the marsh, and then followed silence. Dan shuffled over the snow. He had no ralowshoes, but the hard surface was like ing cinder-track. He skirted the muskeg lake

f by tril he reached the fringe of trees from lat a tribad. The first faint streaks of dawn showed the sainst the dun clouds in the east. Dan the last have remained by the la est just have remained much longer at Catille's side than he had realized. He could to ow see the willows dotting the muskeg, oss and cautiously began to feel his way to the

namearest clump.

It was not until he had passed several ting lumps that the truth broke upon him. he entire surface of the muskeg was frozen

y the bitter cold!

Dan moved tentatively aside from the villows. Yes, it was true; the muskeg had rown firm in a single night; but for his burprise in the fur cache he could have been of his way with La Rue within a few hours.

Dan strode forward resolutely, peering

hough the faint, opalescent beginnings of wilight to discern the mass of limestone t the head of the island. Suddenly a wolf owled close at hand, and Dan saw the ean shape skulking into the trees.

Call E went on. Now he could distinguish the blurred outlines of the limestone; and now he stood upon the island. Now, dichrough the trees, he saw the store gradually detach itself from the flat obscurity of the darkness and take form.

Dan moved forward slowly. He was naking his plans. Where was Jehane La Rue? Had she warned the crew that he had escaped them, and was still alive? Had he been tracked, were the plans for his final

taking off already matured?

His only chance lay in a sudden rush. If he could overcome any one of the three, and get possession of his gun, he would have the barest fighting chance for He thought of Camille in the success. château, lying unconscious and at death's door. That thought steadied him, gave him lm a new draft upon whatever reserves of strength remained to him.

He was nearing the store. Dawn was breaking fast, already he must be visible to any one watching from within. And nowhere was there shelter. He must go for-

ward openly-

He was behind the angle of the building, and still everything remained still. The door was open! In the gathering light Dan could see that it swung right back against the exterior of the building. He crept forward foot by foot, mentally computing the instant for the rush.

Now he was behind the door. He listened. No sound came from within. Dan had a growing feeling that the ambuscade he had imagined did not exist. He could feel that there was no one waiting on the other side of the door.

He leaped. With three bounds he was within the store.

The echo of his feet upon the yielding boards was the only sound that came to his ears. And, peering through the twilight of the interior, Dan saw that the store was empty!

The table was upset, the chairs were lying on their sides, there was broken glass everywhere, and—so bitter was the cold there were pools of frozen whisky on the

Dan glared about him. There must have been a struggle there. It looked as if the three men had fallen to blows.

The whisky had been spilled in drops running from the table to the door. But those drops were not all whisky. Dan could distinguish more plainly now. were blood—so red was the pool beside the table.

Murder had been done that night, but who had been murdered, whom it was impossible as yet to know.

Dan went to the door. He saw now that the snow was trampled all about the building, and there were bloodstains everywhere. But from the building toward the muskeg there ran a broad trail in the snow, as if some heavy body had been dragged over its surface in the direction of the muskeg. And still that trail of blood ran on and on.

Straight over the muskeg Dan traced it in the dawning day, until it came to an end among the willows. And there Dan found all that remained of Sirois and Lachance.

With that light broke in upon him. The wolves had crossed the muskeg, and, maddened by hunger, had seized the two outlaws while they lay drunk and senseless within the store.

But there was no sign of La Rue's body, and, following the trail back to the store, Dan now perceived that another one led toward the cave.

TRAIGHT through the fissure it ran, and outside the snow bore the imprints of the pads of wolves. Here they had leaped at the fissure and fallen back again, here they had milled, seeking the entrance, yet lacking just that modicum of intelligence that would have enabled them to squeeze through one by one.

Dan halted outside. "La Rue!" he called.

"Give up! I've got you!"

No answer came, and, without hesitation, Dan squeezed through. He saw the fringe of stalactites, and the body of Lafontaine behind it, he looked about him but could see nothing more.

But a faint crooning sound came from within the fur cache behind, and Dan, after calling again, and receiving no reply,

stepped through.

It was still almost dark within, but there was just light enough for him to distinguish the outlines of the two figures on the

ground.

One was Jehane La Rue. She crouched, holding La Rue's body in her arms, and she was crooning, as one croons to a child. When Dan touched her on the shoulder and spoke to her, she continued crooning, as if completely oblivious of his presence.

Dan kneeled down and looked at La Rue. The outlaw had just died, for the body was not yet cold. He was horribly mangled. In his mind Dan reconstructed the last dreadful scene—the rush of the wolves, the seizure of Lachance and Sirois. La Rue's desperate fight for life as he made for the cave. And those shrieks of Jehane's had signalled her discovery of him.

He drew the dead man out of Jehane's arms. "Come!" he said to the girl. "There is no use of staying here any longer."

She did not hear him, but she rose to her

feet when he pulled at her arm, an "F him lead her back to the chateau."

Those weeks that followed were much more than a dream to Dan. At they were a dream of fear and ang when he fought death, hour by hour the possession of Camille. There were of despair when life seemed slowly ebb but there were hours of intense happ when he began to hope that the fight won.

Dan had never fought that kind fight before, for he himself was for day the grip of the fever devil, as the result the wolf-bite. There were days when roused himself from his delirium to at to Camille, to get food for her and woman whose mind had gone for ever, left her mentally like a year-old descended to Somehow Dan won through.

So that at last there came the day w Camille and he stood at the door of chateau together, the sleigh and harne dogs beside them, and Jehane seated on

sleigh, staring into vacancy.

Lafontaine's body, with the remains Louis and La Rue, had been committed the muskeg till that day when it will g

up its secrets.

Camille looked at Jehane. "I feel—so"
how—it is the best that could have house
pened," she said, "short of death. I fee
a way that I have won my little sister has
again. Sometimes I think she knows
and I am sure the past, with its sins
sufferings, has gone from her mind
ever."

Dan heard her only vaguely. He thinking of their journey south together determined the mission on the Great Slave, where the were to be married. And in the air who the first scents of spring.

MARCH REAL WESTERN

Featuring

2 GUN-SWIFT NOVELS

66 PARSON BILL?

by CHARLES ALDEN SELTZER

AND

"WOLF MEDICINE"

by HUGH PENDEXTER

THERE'S ALWAYS MORE FOR YOUR MONEY IN A
DOUBLE ACTION MAGAZINE



SAYS MOUNTIE ROYCE:

an "From what I've seen in Canada so far, things here ain't so awful different from what they are in Texas—where there's a hell of a lot of law wrote from behind the sights of a six-gun."



re hout with a hiss that was savage, deadly in its confect centrated venom. Braced against his boulder, his head thrust forward between his hunched shoulders, and the beart was staring menacingly out over the sights of his two leveled forty-fives that covered was the crowd?

"Stick 'em up high an' keep 'em up high!" he crowd?

"Stick 'em up high an' keep 'em up high!" he he last. It's Red Jack Barry talkin', hombresan' if his legs has went back on him, his thumbs ain't!... Blast yuhr stinkin' soul to hell, Latham, did yuh hear me tell yuh fo stick 'em up?"

For the second time that night, the smuggler leader had been jolted out of his smilling calm. His delay, in obeying Barry's astounding order was due to his surprise, rather than to the possession of any to sure the second time that night, the smuggler that it is surprise, rather than to the possession of any work in hands went up with the others, but he wolced a violent protest.

"You foo!! What the devil do you think you're doing, anyway? Put those guns down before I—"

"Shut up!" Barry snarled, and the brittle steel in his voice rang on an ominous note. "I'm doin' the talkin' right now, sabe? Yuh've had yuhr say—"

all of yuh—when yuh figured I was through an' yuh could kick me without scuffin' yuhr boots. I ain't crazy, Latham. It wasn't my head I hit when I fell off a hawss—yeah, I fell off a haws—yeah, I fell off a haws.—yeah, I fell off a haws— -S01 46

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any of yuh hear tell about that before, did yuh? I fell off a hawss! A hell of a joke, ain't it? Why don't some of yuh laugh?"
They had been ready enough to laugh before, or, at least, to smile with indifferent contempt which they had not troubled to conceal. But no one was inclined to laughter now; there was not a sound, not a movement anywhere among the men.

That curiously flat, lipless mouth of Red Barry's twisted into a mirthless grimace. The frielight flickered on his gray, haggard features; in it, his pale eyes gleamed strangely, terribly, like the eyes of a wounded wild beast at bay.

"No customers, huh? Well, here's another one for yuh yuh ain't heard: This here Royce feller beat me to the draw! A kid, an' a Canuck, at that, outsmarted Red Jack Barry, an' took his guns away from him, right to his face! Wouldn't that make yuh spilt yuhr sides? Laugh, why don't yuh? It was fruny as all hell ten minutes ago, wasn't it?"

And still no one spoke nor moved, although the tension was growing intolerable. The air seemed electric, pulsing with the throb of primitive passions, precariously held in leash by fear. But the leash would break—it must break, and soon.

"I've mebbe pulled a lot o' shady tricks in my time," Barry went on more slowly, panting a little. "When any feller got in my way, I ain't been none too choosey how I got him out of It; I done whatever come most handy at the time. But, up to yet, I ain't never got me tangled up in no business that called for murderin' women—an'. I'm tellin' yuh, no gang o' lousy, long-haired hawss thieves, with a damn' dude boss from the East, is goin' to get away with it now!"

His gaze had never once wavered from the cowed and sullen group that the black muzzles of his two

His gaze had never once wavered from the cowed and sullen group that the black muzzles of his two guns threatened. He was Red Jack Barry, the killer; hated and feared as no other member of the band, not even Lefty Louis himself, had ever been.

Don't miss this stirring cow-boy novel of a gun-swift hombre from Texas who turns manhunter and joins the Northwest Mounted Police in order to wipe out a desperate gang of criminals who are running dope and illicit cattle across the Montana border in the FEBRUARY issue of

NORTHWEST NOVEL

Also in the same issue:-

"SAVAGERY," A Big Novelette by HAL G. EVARTS.

"THE YELLOW-BACK" by JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD.

"THE LONG DODGE" by SAMUEL TAYLOR.

REMEMBER: THERE'S ALWAYS MORE FOR YOUR MONEY IN A DOUBLE ACTION MAGAZINE

ROARING BILL by WILLIAM BYRON MOWERY

THIS SPLENDID STORY OF "THE MAN WHO DIED"—OF THE MOUNTAINS, AND OF A GREAT-HEARTED GIANT WHO HAD REASON TO LOVE THEM—IS THE FINEST THING YET WRITTEN BY THE MAN WHO HAS ALREADY GIVEN US "SERGEANT TERRIBLE," "LOST VALLEY," AND OTHER DEEPLY IMPRESSIVE STORIES.

WAS sitting behind the barracks that afternoon, smoking and trying to read a book. It was a poor try; the book had too much competition. At the edge of the woods a hundred yards away a deer was watching me, thinking itself unseen. Farther up along the slope there was an engrossing play of life—bird-calls, and marmots whistling, and squirrels leaping dizzily in the tree-tops.

From the river valley the snow-crowned Tunahlin Range sloped up gradually westward to the glacier peaks several miles dis-

tant. The hardwoods of the lower timber belts were splashed with riotous autumn colors. And down the Tunahlin Valley came an endless succession of high-flying V'sducks, geese, white wavies, cranes, pelicans and the whole migrant rout - all of them gabbling, squawking, flackering and honk-ing south before the first woolly - whipper whooped down from the Yukon.

The sunshine beating against the split logs felt mighty good, for the crisp October air had a vigorous tang to it. No one except myself was at barracks. Corporal McCourtie had borrowed my heavy rifle and gone up-valley to lay for a bear which he had seen and which he declared was the granddaddy of

all the grizzlies in the Canadian Rockies Constable King was out on patrol to a Indian settlement over east. Constable "Slob-Ice" Webster had gone down-valle to the H. B. fur station for our tobacco an some grouse ammunition.

W

Our days usually passed like that; whad very little to do. Our post was buried deep in the mountain wilderness of the western Cassiars, away from men and therefor away from work. An old gold-trail comin up from Edmonton and Calgary and For George forked in front of our door, on



branch leading west over the Tunahlins to Telegraph Creek and on to Juneau, the other north to Dawson. We had about a hundred Moose-antler and Beaver Indians to look after, a couple of timber-estimating camps fifty miles southeast, a few dozen méti (half-breed) trappers, an occasional bighorn hunter, a sourdough now and then, and three lone wilderness homesteaders a day's ride down the valley.

We did all that was expected of us and more, and still had most of our time to ourselves. We hunted, fished, climbed some respectable glaciers, mapped a big block of country; and three evenings a week we walked up to "Roaring Bill" Mallory's cabin on the mountain-side where the Dawson telegraph came through, and listened to the ticking news of the outside world.

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NE good man could have held down the post easily enough, and here were four of us. The Mounted doesn't usually waste its personnel like that. When I first came, I had wondered what under heaven was the reason of it. Then very gradually I realized. We were sent there not to work, but to recover from work. We were a sort of casualty squad, gathered at odd times from three different divisions. Instead of being invalided home to mope around and become soft, we had been sent to this Tunahlin River post, with merely nominal duties, to get in shape again for real service.

I think that our physical remolding was only a small factor in our being sent there. It is true the place was terrifically healthy; I had never seen any that quite equaled it for that. The winter cold, though intense, was dry and invigorating; the summer robust and exuberant. We breathed a mountain perfume of fir and pine all the time. It was a strenuous place; a man either went down and out quickly, as young Corporal Davis did, or else became as hard as oak again in a season. But the real reason of our being sent there was a little deeper and more subtle than body health; and it showed a profound wisdom in our sometimes-reviled superiors.

My own case will illustrate. I had been three years on the "hop squad" working in Vancouver. There are probably more drugs brought in along that strip of coast than at any other place on the continent. Those years were three years of hell. Hell means complete loss of faith in human nature and a belief that the ordinary virtues simply do

not exist. I was no thinner of skin than the next fellow; some of my squad stuck it out only a year before asking for transfer. But three years of that work put me on the rocks physically and did worse than that mentally. I looked down into depths of depravity and vice so long and so steadily that I lost perspective, lost faith, and believed I was seeing the whole world in miniature.

Constable King was there for the same reason; he had been on the "hop squad" in Montreal. Webster's case was just the opposite of ours. He had been marooned four years on an Arctic island north of Seventyfive when the relief-ship twice failed to get through the ice and relieve him. I figured they were getting him used to civilization again by slow degrees. Corporal McCourtie's tragic case was unmentionable in detail. We never spoke of it, and whenever we saw him thinking about it, we snapped him out of it some way or other. It involved his young wife at a lonely station up near the Barren Grounds, and a pack of hungry, savage half-wolf huskies belonging to some Chippewyans, and McCourtie's desperate, futile attempts at surgery, and his lone, funereal sled-trip of three hundred and fifty miles.

So we were a casualty squad, or had been, rather; for all four of us were in the keenest health of body and mind again. We had taken on weight—stout muscle and bone; we had hardened; we had broadened out; we had straightened up and even added somewhat to our stature, though we were grown men around thirty years of age.

Some part of our redemption no doubt was due to the mere passing of time, but the greater part could be credited to our environment. There was a hugeness to that wilderness, a loneliness of just the right degree, an elemental molding power, that were far more potent than the tonic air or the vigor of the climate. I think that the exuberant zest and robust optimism and rugged qualities of our outfit had their counterparts in the wilderness spread around us, and that we drank them in without knowing it.

WAS looking back across my seasons there and philosophizing about them over the pipe, and growling inwardly at my orders to report at Headquarters in November, when I heard two horses trotting up the valley trail. I thought it was King re-

turning; he had taken an extra mount. But a few moments later an Indian, Bearfeathers, stalked around the corner of the barracks.

"Man want see you," he grunted, after I had returned his greeting. "I fetch'm up

I stepped around toward the front. A stranger with a small leather portfolio in his hand was gazing up at the R. C. M. P. legend above the door. I walked on up to him.

He was a queer-looking person for that country. No sourdough or timber man or Government expert, but manifestly a *chechahco*. And even as an outsider I could not pigeonhole him. He was no big-game hunter, no professional roamer, no oil prospector. One could see that at a glance.

He was dressed in a serge suit that betrayed considerable wear. He wore a cap and "sidewalk" shoes, and a necktie that looked like a shoestring. I judged he was thirty-four or -five. He was medium-tall and a trifle chumpy. His eyes were a mild hazel, his face round, his complexion almost baby-pink. In spite of my wondering what on earth had brought him there to see me, I was a bit amused at the figure he cut.

"You're Sergeant Loring, sir?" he asked, looking at the three stripes.

"Yes."

He fished in his vest pocket and produced a card. I glanced at it.

THOMAS E. PENCE Attorney-at-Law

198 Fuller Street Pacific 7865 "Of Seattle, Washington, sir," he added,

clearing his throat.

It was a surprise to hear he hailed from so far away, and I was wondering what under heaven his mission could be; but it was a bigger surprise still to discover he was a lawyer. I looked at him closely as we shook hands. In my quick judgment a man more utterly unsuited to be a lawyer was hard to imagine. There was no brusque aggressiveness nor fighting quality about him. He lacked the sharp eye and quick, crisp tongue. He lacked every last essential of the profession. A lawyer worthy of the name could have stared him out of court.

His shabby clothes and battered old portfolio proved my judgment, proved him a pretty sorry failure. They indicated that carrying a brief-case was about as near as he came to being a real attorney. I pictured him drawing up small wills and doing other such five-dollar jobs—when he could get them. My amusement was slightly tinged with contempt.

Later I remembered, with the deepest shame and chagrin, this first reaction toward Pence. But I had nothing then to go on save his outward appearance.

He seemed a little backward or puzzled about starting to explain his mission.

"You probably came up here for a hunting vacation?" I suggested, to start him.

"No, sir; I came up here to find a man. I was told that you perhaps would help me—"

I was astonished. Man-hunts were no very uncommon thing, but it was unusual to find a man like Pence on one of them.

"Certainl;" I answered, hiding my surprise. "I'll be glad to do what I can if you'll tell me the circumstances."

"My last clear trace of him was about a hundred miles down the valley, at the little mining center called Singing Rock. They said he came up this trail. I followed on up to this abandoned mining-camp below here. The trading-master knew nothing about him, but he gave me a guide and some horses and sent me on to you."

"What kind of a looking man is he?"

Pence stooped, opened the portfolio and took out two pictures. They were studio photographs, one a full-length picture, the other a close-up, both made in Seattle. The first showed a tall, lanky youth, thin as a bean-pole, stoop-shouldered, dressed rakishly and expensively, and trying his simpering best to look like a man. A girl was hanging on his arm, smiling sidewise at him. Her profile was very pretty, but there was something about her smile I didn't like. It was too doting—and manufactured.

The other picture, a close-up of the youth alone, said a lot. Dissipation, pampered idleness, viciousness, sensuality, were a few of the traits boldly and plainly brought out by a photographer more honest than flattering. I doubt if I ever saw a face I disliked more intensely. And there was an added depravity which I quickly recognized. The loose, shrunken lines of the jaws, the unnaturally rounded eyes, and other telltale marks—I had seen them on so many faces that I could spot a "snow-bird" as far as I could see him.

This particular lad, however, I had never seen before. He was a total stranger to me. I wondered what on earth could ever have brought him clear up into that wilderness.

"Did he perhaps come past here?" Pence

asked hesitantly.

My "No!" was pretty blunt. I was thinking that if I had seen a thing like that up there when nobody was around, I would have been tempted to put my foot on its neck and take hold of its legs and pull.

Pence seemed hurt and disappointed at my inability to help him. He mopped his face, though he must have been shivering

in that thin serge suit.

"It's been quite some time ago, sir. May-

be you've forgotten him."

"He didn't come past since I've been here," I answered firmly. "If he'd passed when I was out on patrol, the men would have told me about it. Strangers—especially like that—are rare up here; folk remember them a long time."

"I know, I know, sir," Pence agreed. "It astonished me how well people remembered

him-those who saw him.'

Is disappointment deepened. It was so tragic that I felt sorry for him, and for his sake-began to take more than a perfunctory interest in his quest. Besides, I wondered more and more why a lad like that should have left home, or at least left snow-peddlers and luxury behind. I wondered why Pence was after him, seeming deeply concerned and troubled. It struck me there was something unusual and strange here. But I did not pry. I have learned that folk have a tendency to close up like a pricked oyster when you pry, and to disclose everything if you don't.

"Which direction was he headed?" I asked, thinking hard. "Toward Juneau, or

on straight north?"

"I don't know, sir."

"You say it was sometime ago?"

"Yes, sir, quite sometime ago. In fact, sir—it—ah—"

I was busy thinking and paid little attention to his hesitant "ah's." If the youth had taken the Dawson Trail, he probably had passed out of the picture before he reached the next cabin, for it was eighty miles away over a terrific path. But if he had turned west on the Juneau fork, he would have passed Mallory's cabin. Mallory was in the habit of mothering things like that. There was no discrimination about him; anything that came along was hugely welcomed. We were more or less

transients, but he was a moss-backed fixture. If the lad had taken the Juneau trail, Mallory more than likely would know something about him.

"And you're sure, sir," Pence asked, halfpleading, half-apologetic for repeating his question, "that he didn't pass here?"

"I didn't see him if he did. The most I can do for you is to take you to another man who might have seen him. It's about an hour's walk."

Pence's face brightened up hopefully. His sincerity and mildness was beginning to overcome the amusement with which I first sized him up. I hadn't the heart to tell him that our trip would be just what I had said—an hour's walk. If Mallory had seen the lad, there was about one chance in ten thousand of him not telling us about it, for we talked of everything under the sun during those evenings up there. And there was another reason, which seemed to me almost symbolic. At the fork the Juneau Trail climbed up into the mountains; the Dawson Trail led up the easy valley—for a little distance. A youth such as the picture showed would be likely to take the easy path without considering where it led to.

"I'd be very grateful for your trouble, sir," Pence said eagerly. "If I can trace him past this fork of the trail, it will be

easy to follow him then."

I assured him it would be no trouble at all. Going into the cabin, I got my gun and belt and also a fur coat for Pence—young Corporal Davis' coat—explaining off-handedly, when I went out and gave it to him, that it would be deucedly chilly up the mountain. He took it very thankfully.

I let off a couple shots by way of signal, to make sure Mallory was home. Following my eyes, Pence was looking up at the far-away cabin in the tiny mountain-side clearing. At that distance the swath where the telegraph-line went through looked like a mere ribbon.

A half-minute later I heard Mallory's roar come rolling down over the fir tops. I closed the door of the barracks and made Bear-feathers grin by telling him to hold

the fort till we got back.

"Good gracious!" Pence exclaimed, as we started toward the edge of the woods. "Can that man halloo two miles? Old Polyphemus must have roared like that!"

I tacked another quality on Pence. Whatever his legal attainments, he was pretty well educated. His talk gave him away. "Two miles?" I answered. "You aren't used to mountains. It's four miles up there. Bill can roar six; he can roar eight on still winter days. He practices roaring at the mountains."

Though I was telling the honest truth, most *chechahcos* would have thought I was playing upon their ignorance. But Pence did not. He simply accepted what I said as true. I think he accepted what anybody said as true. As I began to get acquainted, I felt myself warming toward him. One couldn't help liking his sincerity and candor. And I began to see that he had more depth to him than what I first imagined.

He seemed interested in the telegraph line; and at the first stop to let him breathe, I explained it was a relic of the attempt to connect America and Europe by throwing a line up across British Columbia and Alaska to Bering Straits, across that to Siberia, and across the Czar's domain clear to the European capitals; and that word of the success of the Atlantic cable had stopped the gigantic undertaking when it was half completed. I explained that this portion of the line was still in use to keep the Canadian Yukon in touch with the world, and that every eighty miles along it was a cabin where a man lived who "walked the wire" and kept the line in repair. added that the man we were going to see was the oldest "wire-walker" on the job, that the rest could never stick it out over a couple of years.

At the next stop to breathe I probed a little bit, for Pence's quest and the whole situation had me puzzled and interested. I found out that the youth's name was Sidney Atherton; that he had inherited a good-sized fortune of several hundred thousand dollars; that he had suddenly "pitched off" without much more than the clothes on his back—without funds, or jewelry save a watch, or even the ability to earn his living except with his hands. It was beyond imagination that a person like him and in his circumstances should deliberately

cut himself off like that.

"Maybe he was a victim of aphasia," I

suggested.

"No, sir. He wrote his name on a hotel register in Chilcotin. That's how I first got trace of him. The handwriting positively was his."

"I suppose you'll get a handsome bit of change if you find him, after your long,

hard search."

"No, sir," Pence answered. "The fee has nothing to do with it. In fact, there is no fee involved."

He must have seen my surprise and be-

wilderment, for he added:

"You see, he is a relative of mine, sir—a first cousin. His father and my mother were brother and sister. His father was in the ocean transport business. He operated some coast-wise steamers and a line to Japan—".

"And your father?" I blurted out before

thinking.

"A minister, sir."

I was able to piece the picture together. Atherton's father could build up a fortune in the cutthroat Oriental trade. The same traits which enabled him to do that were strong in Pence's mother. She probably had small use for the ministry as a profession for her son. She had chosen law for him. That would explain the pathetic misfit.

"And besides the relationship," he added, "Sidney and I were always good friends—

especially after our parents died."

THE idea of Pence being friends with the youth of that picture was almost incredible. They were as far apart as the poles. One threadbare poor, the other rich; one candid and sincere and high-minded, the other sneaking and vicious and debauched. But if Pence said they were friends, it was the truth, whatever the explanation.

While we climbed the last stretch to Mallory's cabin, I found out a few more things about Pence himself. He was married; he had two children; he could ill afford this expensive search. His law-practice was very slender, as I had guessed at first. He wanted to get out of it and take a degree in classics and teach, but he hadn't the

money for the two years' study.

I noticed him looking around at the wilderness; at the valley spread below us, at the snowy peaks above, at the far-flung leagues of primitive, virgin forest. He sniffed the tang of pine on the thin, crisp air, and his eyes grew a little wider with awe as he looked around at the immense distances. I think he appreciated, for all his city life, the huge, elemental power of that wilderness. A month or two of strenuous idleness there, I thought, would do him a world of good.

Another thing I noticed, a very trivial incident, but none the less indicative. At

our last stop a belated brulé fly lit on his wrist and stung. A brulé fly can sting painfully, can sting till the blood trickles. Our habit was to smash them so hard that we usually hurt ourselves. But Pence merely looked at the fly and brushed it off. It seemed as if he took care not to injure the thing.

As we stepped out of the lodgepoles and approached Mallory's cabin, I found myself clutching at the same straw that Pence had clutched at. I wanted Mallory to know something about the depraved lad so that Pence's search would be cut short or speeded up at least and so that he could get back to his family.

Bill came out of the cabin and a couple of rods down the path to meet us. could see Pence's mild eyes light up with amazement at the sight of this bush Hercules. We were so used to Bill that he no longer was a marvel to us, but I could imagine how he must have appeared to a stranger as he came face-to-face with us

there on the hill-slope.

Constable Webster stood six feet one, but Mallory could look over his head. Though he was broad as a door, hugeshouldered, huge-chested and tremendously muscled, yet he was not stocky. He was perfectly built and perfectly proportioned. He took a great pride in his superb body. His hard work would have made him muscle-bound had he not guarded against that by practicing special muscular feats that were his delight. He must have weighed better than two hundred and fifty, yet he was light on his feet and a swift runner; and—though the word sounds odd -he was graceful.

Unlike a good many big men who are comparatively weak, Mallory was as strong as he looked. I knew him once to throw a three-hundred-pound caribou across his shoulder and walk home with it, five miles up a mountain game-trail! Whenever a bad storm snapped the telegraph at several places, he hit the trail—chopping, splicing, whooping on to the next break till all of them were mended, though it took him two or three or four days around the clock. When a tree was down across the line, he would roar at it and shake his ax and demolish the offending stick. He walked the wire through the worst blizzards the Yukon could hurl down at us; and very often in winter-time, when his neighbors on each side were afraid to stir outdoors,

he covered their eighty miles for them and made repairs.

McCourtie called him "shaggy-barked," and in one way the words fitted him. His clothes were rough, homemade ones of leather. His hair, which he habitually combed with his fingers, was long and manelike. His heavy black beard went on down his neck and spread out over his

chest in a heavy growth.

But in another way the words did not They implied a rough, ignorant bear of a man, and Mallory was not that. I knew him intimately, more intimately even than the other three of us did; and I can vouch for his being more than a big, goodhearted ignoramus. He had a shelf of books in his cabin, and devoured them hugely. He borrowed every volume that King and I had brought, and he was surprisingly well-informed for a man who had lived his life in the bush. And he was not queer or on the verge of "shaking hands with the willows," as a good many men are who lead a solitary life on the furpath or gold-trail. He had some of the habits; he talked to himself; he kept pets and talked to them as if they were his children; he welcomed passers-by effusively; but he was entirely sane and wholesome.

Bill had come to mean a lot to us four men. Our zest and exuberant spirits and rugged health were more or less reflections of the mountain wilderness around us, but Mallory was the living incarnation of those Whenever we felt blue-and that was pretty often in the early dayswe went up to visit Bill, and came back whistling. Why he should have been buovant I don't know. He worked at terrific labor in all kinds of weather for thirty dollars a month, lived in a rough shack, had nothing but the telegraph click and dogeared books for amusement. But his buoyancy was infectious. It surged out of him spontaneously. It overwhelmed whomever he came in contact with. I knew a wearyeved Duluth banker who came in to hunt bighorns for a week and stayed a month, till the search-party came after him-following Bill around, listening to his roaring laugh, as if he had discovered something new, something priceless.

Mallory was elemental; he was something to tie to; he was a fire to warm our hands at; he was deep-rooted and unshakable as a mountain; he was-but Constable King summed it up when he said: "As long as Bill Mallory is up there roaring, I'm not afraid of devils." For that was the way we all felt.

I think that our respect for Mallory and our faith in him and his power of good over us were founded largely upon his simple-heartedness. He seemed as innocent and guileless as a baby. It was a marvel to see all that strength going handin-hand with gentleness and mildness. He and I had become about as intimate as two men can be, and I had never vet discovered anything in him but gentleness. My philosophy and all my observation inclined me to believe there were shortcomings and even latent capabilities of evil in any man; but in Mallory's case I had to conclude that this was not true. The mildest and most gentle man I ever knew before meeting Bill, had acquired those traits as a reaction from a crime. But with Mallory such a thing was unthinkable.

S I knew he would be, Pence was tongue-tied with amazement at the sight of this whopping big stranger. And just as I had been, Mallory was pretty much surprised at Pence, for Pence did cut a queer figure. I let them size each other up a few moments before introducing them, for the contrast between those two was something laughable.

Bill's two pets had come out of the cabin with him. He was always bringing in fawns or wounded birds or cub animals, and just now he had a pair so strange that only his vigorous paternal language kept them from warfare. There was Pete, a Canada goose whose wing had mended almost enough for him to join the migration; and Jasper, a half-grown patch fox -a wild and untamable mischief who had strictly no use for hissing geese or any other two-legged creature except Mallory. Jasper was standing between Mallory's legs, staring up at us suspiciously from his glinting oval eyes; and Pete had flopped up to Bill's arm, where he looked for all the world like the pictures one sees of a lady with a canary perched upon her wrist. That fox and goose living there together, if not exactly in amity, at least in sufferance of each other, were a living monument to Bill's vast peace-making powers.

None of us ever shook hands with Bill; it was too risky, for he had no idea of his own strength. But Pence didn't know

any better, and I'd forgotten to warn him not to. Bill shook his hand extra heartily. I saw Pence wince. When he drew back his hand, he flexed his fingers furtively and looked to see if any blood had been squeezed out of them.

I told Mallory that Pence wanted to speak with him a few minutes, and he led us back toward the door of the shack. In front of it were scattered squirrel-tails and rabbit-ears and mice with the heads eaten off-Jasper's handiwork. This wanton killing was against Bill's principles. Two days before when I came up to visit him, I had heard him roaring: "You dirty hound, you had a ground-hog to eat this morning, and here you come toting in a poor rabbit. I ought to break you in two!"

I noticed that Mallory had already started gathering rocks and logs for the new and bigger cabin he was going to build. Instead of pitching off as the other wire-walkers did after a couple years at most, he evidently was counting on root-

ing in there for good.

We went inside the cabin and sat down, Pence on the chair, Bill and I on upended The sunlight streaming through the small west window just touched the top of Pence's cap. Pete the goose was fumbling in his hand for a tidbit. Jasper, after deciding that the wolf-fur coat was quite harmless, had come in and jumped up into Bill's lap. The door stood open, and I had a magnificent panorama of the ranges and foothills lying eastward.

The cabin was neat but rough and bare. The furniture consisted of four pieces: a bunk, a chair, a tin stove and a block table. A cracked mirror and some cooking tins hung on pegs behind the stove. The center of the floor was covered with three bear rugs. There was a shelf of books above the bunk; and the telegraph set stood beside it so that when the clicking stopped, Bill would wake up. At the other end of the cabin was a small fur loft. A slab, cleated for Pete's climbing to roost, led up to it.

On the shelf, besides the books, was a square, pound-size tobacco can where Mallory kept his money. His expenses were very small, and he made a considerable sum each season from bounties on wolves and catamounts. I figured he must have had many hundreds of dollars in that can. It was a sore temptation to a half-breed bush-sneak or to any person who did not know the wilderness law that thievery of a man's possessions is on a par with murder. No effort is made to hide things usually. The situation is a bit like that of the London bobbies. They wear no guns, but woe to the man who takes advantage of that fact!

SINCE I was the connecting link, I had to break the ice for them. Pence's first words surprised me. They explained his hesitant "ah's" down at the post. This young lad, it seemed, had disappeared a considerable time before any of us Mounted had come to Tunahlin River. I realized, after a moment of thinking, why Pence had been hesitant about that. If he mentioned at first how cold his trail was, people would think him crazy for trying to follow it and would not be likely to interest themselves. After their interest was aroused, he could tell them the facts. It was good reasoning, subtle reasoning, I had to admit. It had worked with me.

As he went on to describe the lad and I happened to glance away from him to Mallory, I had another surprise, a very disturbing and perplexing surprise, this—something was the matter with Mallory. For the first time in my acquaintance with him, his free, open-hearted manner had dropped. His eyes had narrowed suspiciously. He would not look at Pence. He was making a pretense at stroking the fox, but his huge hand trembled with nervousness. He sat very still, and when he spoke, it was in a deeper, hoarser voice than usual.

The change in him was so very pronounced that I could not possibly be mistaken. It was a puzzle, a bewildering puzzle, but not a tenth so bewildering as the shock I got a few moments later.

From the description of the youth, Pence told of him crossing the mountains from Chilcotin to Fort George and trading his watch there for some clothes. Pence had recovered the watch and had obtained an accurate description of those clothes from the trading-book. Naturally he described the corded hat and the fantastically colored buckskin shirt and quilled trousers in minute detail to Mallory and me.

About a month previously I had come up to Bill's cabin to borrow his reloading out-fit. He was out walking the wires. With the same freedom he would have taken down at the station, I hunted around for what I wanted. Up in the fur loft I had come

across some garments. I had wondered about them at the time. They certainly were not Mallory's, for he would have burst them to tatters if he had tried to put them on. I thought they must be the duffle some passer-by had abandoned here. But Pence's description left no doubt in my mind.

Up there in his fur loft Mallory had this lad's hat and shirt and trousers!

My first reaction was stunned surprise. It was the sheer, drilled-in habit of self-control under such circumstances that kept me from jumping to my feet and betraying what I knew. I gripped myself so that Pence or Mallory would not notice, and tried to think.

Of course there were other garments like the ones Pence described, and some one else might have left them there. But this young Atherton had come up the valley. It would have been strange that two people, dressed in clothes so peculiarly alike, should have passed there. The coincidence was too much for me to swallow. And besides, there was Bill's queer behavior.

It occurred to me that Atherton might have changed his clothes and left the old ones behind. But he could not have worn any of Mallory's, and Pence had said that the lad possessed nothing but what he wore on his back. He had traded his last possession, his watch, for them.

Atherton had passed that cabin. That much was bedrock certainty. Mallory knew something about him. That was a dead surety too. Why had Bill never mentioned this strange lad-when he had talked about every other sourdough or 'breed or Indian or chechahco who had ever passed his cabin? He had spoken at great length about these ordinary passers-by; they were events in his solitary life. Why had he never said a word about this extraordinary pallid-faced, drug-shattered, tenderfoot city lad's coming along? He had related trivial incidents about his visitors in great detail. Why had he never mentioned this lad's visit or leaving his clothes there?

My suspicions were aroused—not so much because of the facts I knew, but because of Bill's own actions. I would have swallowed the coincidence—I would have swallowed almost anything—if it had not been for his strange behavior. He gave himself away. He had some knowledge about the lad. His actions were the actions of a man with guilty knowledge.

I tried to laugh at my suspicions that Mallory, Roaring Bill Mallory, could be involved in something he did not wish to speak about; something that would not bear the light of day; something possibly criminal. I said over and over again to myself that he would explain those clothes and his silence satisfactorily. But his nervousness and strained manner were against him.

Then Pence repeated his hesitant question, leaning forward toward Mallory, hanging tremulously upon his answer.

"Did he perhaps pass here—and you saw

him, Mr. Mallory?"

I T was a flat question. I didn't see how Mallory could evade it. I too was hanging upon his answer. If he said no, he would be lying. If he said yes, then he would have to explain those clothes and his strange silence about the lad and what had happened to him.

He was fidgeting nervously on the block of wood, still keeping his eyes away from Pence, though he glanced at me occasionally. He wet his lips a couple times before he spoke; and then—he side-stepped.

"I don't know—I can't say exactly," he answered haltingly. "You say it's been a considerable time ago. Mebbe, if I knowed more about him—"

His nervousness, his tautness, were so utterly unlike him that I knew he was under some tremendous strain. He did know, he could say; he was stalling, he was lying! Though I fought against it, I sensed that here was something which my sworn duty as an officer of the law would compel me to take a hand in and clear up.

Those moments as I sat there watching Bill Mallory were a little blacker than any I had ever gone through. It was not merely the sudden unexpected twist to Pence's hunt. It was not merely discovering that a man was probably a criminal. It was not even discovering something evil in a man whom we had thought honest. It was more than all that. With us Bill Mallory stood for certain things, certain precious, priceless things. When we had been on the rocky edge, it was his great, roaring, devil-chasing laugh, his simple, sunlit philosophy, his vast buoyant spirits that repeatedly dragged us back till we stood solidly on our own feet again. When King and I had faith in nothing else under the sun, not even in ourselves, we had faith in Bill Mallory. When the ordinary virtues had seemed to us mere empty shams which strong men broke and weak men obeyed because they had to, we saw those virtues starkly exemplified in the daily life of a man strong enough and intelligent enough to smash his way through life in whatsoever manner he liked. We had felt, we had sworn, that here was a man innocent of wrongdoing; blameless, guileless and upright. We had pinned our faith to Bill. With the four of us he was symbolic-symbolic of strength going hand-in-hand with gentleness, of purity of heart, of all the things we desperately wanted to believe in and yet-in our calling-had a hard time believing.

If he were guilty of anything, I felt I would never believe in a human being again. Because of all this, the question of his blamelessness now was a question of terrible moment. And as I watched his nervousness and heard him uttering a lie, it struck deeper than a physical wound. There can be no blacker tragedy than the one I was facing. My suspicions of him seemed like a crime, but his lie drove me to them. If it had been in my power at that moment I would have kept that scroll from being unrolled any farther, so that my suspicions would never be anything more than suspicions, and so that the three men down at barracks could keep their faith in Bill. But it was not in my power.

"And you're quite sure, Mr. Mallory—quite sure you never saw him? Won't you try—to remember—that you did?"

"I can't say exactly," Bill repeated. "It's been a long while ago, years ago, you say."

Pence reached down to open his portfolio and took out the pictures. I cut in, then. I saw that Mallory was stalling for time, time to think. I wanted to give him that time—to cook up some story. myself wanted time to think before some action was thrust upon me. The vague outlines of what possibly had happened were forming in my mind. The picture of the youth, his viciousness, his penniless destitution when he came to Mallory's cabin, the can of money recklessly displayed on the shelf, his shameful theft of it after Bill's mothering kindness toward him, and Bill's towering anger—they were plausible outlines. I remembered my own thoughts when I looked at the lad's picture down at the station—remembered what I, with no provocation at all, would have felt like doing to him. Bill had a dozen times more charity than I, true enough; but would even his big-heartedness excuse a treachery and villainy like the lad's stealing his money? I recalled a story which Bear-feathers had told me about Mallory—a story of what Mallory had done to a Beaver whom he caught clubbing his sick squaw.

I was trying desperately to justify Bill. I was clutching at straws; I realized it. If he were given time, he might cook up something to satisfy Pence; and I could

get the truth later. So I cut in.

"Suppose," I said to Pence, "suppose you tell Bill and me some more about this Atherton lad. We're pretty much in the dark. You might give us a clue. We might be able to figure out where he was headed for. What kind of a lad was he? What made him pick up and leave home? And how certain are you that he came up this trail from Fort George?"

Pence hesitated. He was trying to get out of telling the story. I think it went against his principles to speak evil of anybody, and he could not tell the story without saying a lot of hard things. But I told him rather firmly that if I were going to help him I couldn't work in the dark.

"I CAME back to Seattle from my lawschool," Pence began, speaking mostly to me, "when Sidney was seventeen. His father died that same year. His mother had been dead since he was ten years old. He hadn't any near relative except myself. His guardian was a lawyer, the head of the trust-company that has had charge of the estate. According to the will, Sidney got twenty thousand a year to spend until he became of age. The estate, you see, was pretty large; the ships alone of the N-W-O Line sold for half a million—"

"Just a minute," I interrupted, as something like an inspiration flashed into my mind. "You mean his father owned the N-W-O Line? Do you recall if two tramp steamers, the Gavriel Pribylof and the Kuro Siwa, belonged to that line? If I

remember right, they did."

"Yes, sir; Sidney's father owned them."
My inspiration had been correct! Here
was retribution with a vengeance! Sergeant Banks, my predecessor with the Van-

couver hop squad, had told me when he turned over the reins and the departmental secrets, to keep an eye on the crews of those two tramps. For a long time the men had been smuggling "snow" in, Banks said; but he had been unable to get courtsure evidence against them. He had appealed to the ship captains to let him place a man on the ships to get that evidence. They had told him to go to hell. He had appealed to the head of the company, old Atherton himself, pleading for cooperation; and Atherton had coldly replied that what his crews did was no concern of his. Certainly he would not permit any spies on his ships, nor would he go to the expense of hiring new crews because of a sergeant's suspicions.

It was more than probable that some of the "snow" smuggled in on Atherton's ships helped slide his own son down and out!

"What about it, sir?" Pence asked.

"Nothing. Go ahead with your story." "I took an interest in Sidney," Pence continued. "He had some faults, and he developed some—some other—ah-- faults. But I thought he would outgrow them. And he wasn't altogether to blame for them, You know, it is very unjust to give a boy that amount of money to do with as he pleases, especially a boy with no guidance or restraint. His father hadn't taken as much care with Sidney's training as perhaps he should have. His guardian was too busy, during those years after his father's death, to watch after him very closely. Besides, his guardian hadn't much control over him. So I thought it was my duty to guide him and help him find himself. Sidney seemed to like me, if I may say so. I had a good deal of influence over him, and I was hopeful, sir, that he would come out all right. He was not yet out of his formative years, either body or mind-"

OW, I knew what Pence was meaning and would not boldly out with, for I was painfully familiar with the retarding, stultifying effects of the drug. Listening to his prevarications, I was reading the true story back of what he said. Those "some faults" he mentioned were viciousness and pampered idleness and prodigal extravagance. The "other—ah—faults" which the lad developed were sensual indulgence and the "snow" habit. I could see how old man Atherton, too calloused and unconcerned to give Sergeant

Banks a little help in his praiseworthy fight, would also be so busy and so blind to higher values that he saw nothing but the outside of his son. Though it looked like a paradox on the face of it, I could understand, too, why young Atherton should like Pence, and why Pence was the only man who could do anything with him. To sway a depraved lad like him took infinite patience, such as the busy guardian did not have; and utter unselfishness and forbearance and kindness—such as Pence did have. And probably, when the lad's vicious habits broke out openly, Pence was the only one who stuck by him.

It struck me that this lawyer-guardian "too busy to look after him closely" must surely be getting many thousands a year for supervising the lad and the estate. I wondered how much Pence, the lad's spiritual guardian, ever got? His clothes answered that question. I remembered the remark I had dropped as we were climbing up to Mallory's cabin—"You'll get a handsome bit of change—" and it made me ashamed.

"You were not his official guardian,

then?" I probed.

"No, sir, I was merely a friend."

"Please excuse a personal question, Pence. But I am interested in your story. You say young Atherton liked you. A few thousand dollars meant little to him. He probably knew you wanted to get that degree. Did he like you to the extent of—"

"Oh, yes, sir," Pence interrupted. "He offered me money a good many times. But don't you see that I couldn't accept it?"

"Why not? I don't see."

"If I'd have taken money from him, it would have looked—he might have thought that I was sticking by him for—ah—interested reasons, sir. And that would have completely undermined my influence with him."

"Go ahead," I bade him in a moment.

"I was hopeful, sir," Pence went on, "that Sidney would come out all right in the end. His mother was a woman of splendid, shining character, and I thought that eventually the heritage from her would overcome the heritage from—"

He stumbled, and started to retrieve his

slip.

"From his father," I finished his sen-

tence bluntly. "Go on."

"Of course I was hopeful for Sidney because he was my relative, and also because we were close friends. But there was an-

other reason, sir. I don't know if I can make you understand it, but I'll try. It seemed to me that Sidney's case was typical of every young man who wakes up to manhood and finds himself struggling with deep influences and desires and temptations that he has not been trained to meet courageously and well. Of course Sidney's twenty thousand a year was a powerful weapon against himself which few young people have; but the main thing, the critical thing, was his lack of guidance. In that way his case was typical. What I'd like to make you understand, sir—I thought that if he could be swung off the road he'd started on and pointed at something better, there'd be a lot of hope for others like him, for most folk considered him beyond grace or recall. Of that whole class who are considered hopeless, Sidney was-"

"Symbolic," I interrupted. "I understand you perfectly, Pence. And it was a very momentous issue with you, Pence."

"Yes sir—symbolic. And it was as you say, a momentous issue. I didn't dare give up, or despair. I stuck with him for several years. And very gradually I began to succeed. He was weaning himself away from the wrong kind of associates, and talking about college, and cutting down on—"

NCE again poor Pence stumbled, and started to retrieve his slip.

"Cutting down on dope!" I finished for him. "I saw that in the picture. Go ahead."

Pence mopped his forehead. I was sorry I had been so brutal.

"Then Sidney met a girl and fell in love with her. Very deeply in love, sir. think it was the most potent thing which had ever come into his life. I knew it would be either a very good influence or a very bad one. That all depended on the I didn't—ah—like her so very well; but then I didn't really know her. So I But Sidney's resolved just to watch. guardian took a hand in it. He still managed the estate, although Sidney was twenty-three; for one of the provisions of the will was that Sidney could not touch his estate till he had finished his education. So the guardian had a certain influence over him.

"I found out afterward just what happened. If I had known in time, I would have strongly opposed it. His guardian called Sidney to his office one day and told him very forcefully that the girl was—a—a
—ah—"

It seemed I was slated to supply all of Pence's hard words for him. I wasn't entirely sure of the right word this time, but I remembered the girl's face and took a chance.

"A gold-digger?"

"Yes sir; he called her a notorious golddigger, and he told Sidney she would give him a golden fleecing and throw him over in a year's time. Those are his very words, sir; he repeated them to me. Sidney called him a liar. He wanted to fight. He offered to wager his whole estate. As nearly as I can remember, his guardian said:

"'I could make six hundred thousand dollars mighty easy, Atherton; but if I'd take it away from you on a bet as sure as that, I'd get run out of town. you've called me a liar and you wanted to fight, and you ought to be willing to stage a show-down. Since you've mentioned your confounded estate, suppose I write a personal letter to this girl and inform her in friendly fashion that your estate has gone on the rocks and that you'll be penniless in three months when receivership is demanded? I'll make it sound plausible, all right. And I'll give her an excuse for my letter by telling her how much you need her love and sympathy and so forth now, and won't she try to comfort you and stick with you closer than ever. If you're so damned sure of her as to call me a liar, you ought to agree to that!'

"Sidney was sure of her, sir. He was so eager to prove her innocence that he jumped at this chance. He even helped write the letter, and supplied some personal details.

"Sidney and she had planned to take a short yachting trip the next day. He went down to his yacht in Elliot Bay to wait for her as they had arranged. His guardian came to see what happened. She did not appear. Instead came a note. Sidney turned white as he tore it open. The guardian didn't know what it said, for Sidney slumped against the rail, shivering and nerveless and stricken; and the paper slipped out of his fingers and went fluttering out upon the water. After a while he managed to go down to the cabin, and poured himself a little liquor and then went ashore, never speaking a word to anybody.

"No one ever saw him after he stepped

ashore. He didn't even go back to his apartment. He simply disappeared.

"We tried to find him. We advertised; we hired detectives. But for six years we never got a trace of him. It wasn't till this July that we heard of him again. Then a man who'd years ago been skipper on one of Atherton's coast-wise boats and who'd gone into the lumber business for himself up the Fraser River, came back to Seattle and heard about the disappearance. He hunted me up and told me about seeing Sidney Atherton's name on the hotel register in Chilcotin six years ago. He wondered at the time what young Atherton was doing up there, but he didn't realize its significance till he heard about Sidney's disappearing.

"I went up there immediately and verified what he said. I traced Sidney across to Fort George. There is no doubt in the world about it, sir. People remembered him very distinctly. He was dressed queerly for what folks up here call 'the bush.' And he acted queerly too, as you may imagine he would do. From Fort George I traced him—"

INTERRUPTED Pence there. I had added together several things he had said; and an idea—an idea about Pence—was shooting through my mind. I had studied him as he talked. He himself was a hundred times more interesting, more amazing, more worthy of attention than the story he told of a worthless young hophead. Except as it affected Pence and Bill Mallory, I did not give a damn what had happened to this Atherton whelp. As far as I was concerned, he was out of the story. It was Mallory and Pence, and what those two men signified, that I cared about.

More and more as he talked, Pence had come to the forefront of my thoughts and Mallory, in spite of his momentous issue still hanging fire, had slipped back. Pence was amazing, he was a growing revelation. I had come to realize that the man was profoundly wise in matters of human psychology. His hesitant "ah's" were one small instance of it. And from my own past three years, I could surely appreciate the profound wisdom of a man who could fight against the snow habit and a vicious nature and twenty thousand a year. I hadn't the faintest doubt but that Pence would have succeeded entirely if this guar-

dian had not butted in and ruined every-

For all his mildness, Pence was tenacious as a bulldog. His six years of trying to reform the lad were witness to that. doubted if Bill Mallory had that much courage. In his own quiet way Pence was cheerful and optimistic. His cheerfulness was of the deliberate, reasoned sort—the diametric opposite of Mallory's huge, roaring overflow. I suspected that when one got to know him intimately he would be as inspiriting and strengthening as Mallory had been to us. And Pence had achieved his cheerfulness with no aid from a wonderful natural environment or high-spirited animal health; he had achieved it in spite of meager earnings and a dozen carking worries and all the petty human sordidness that he encountered in his distasteful profession.

His kindness, his charity, his transparent sincerity were other qualities of the man. I fully realized by now that when I stepped around the corner of the barracks down below there and saw him gazing up at the letters, it had been my good fortune to meet a man entirely worthy of respect and admiration. But all these traits were tame compared with the idea—the idea about Pence—which was shooting through my mind. It seemed incredible; it was amazing; but still—Pence was amazing. So I cut in, to see if it could be true.

"Just a minute," I interrupted. "I want to ask you a couple questions, Pence. What happened to the Atherton estate?"

"Nothing, sir. The trust company still administers it. The guardian is a very wise man financially. I think the estate must be worth eight or nine hundred thousand dollars by now."

"The will made provisions for the disposal of the estate in case young Atherton died, did it not?"

"Yes sir."

"You no doubt know the law in a matter of wills like this, Pence. You know that the legacy could be thrown into court, and Sidney Atherton, in view of his long absence, adjudged legally dead. Is there an 'Enoch Arden statute' in Washington? There isn't? Then the common law would cover this instance. If the case were thrown into court and pressed hard, the common law would adjudge young Atherton legally dead, wouldn't it, Pence?"

"Yes sir; I believe it would."

"Now, what were these provisions of the will in case young Atherton died, Pence?"

I think he saw what I was driving at. He fidgeted in the creaky chair. I had to repeat the question.

"There's provision for founding a chair of nautical engineering at the University, and several bequests to his ship-captains and—"

"Lump these small items all together, Pence, and deduct them. How much of the estate is left?"

"About two-thirds, sir, or six hundred thousand."

"What happens to that?"

"It goes to various relatives."

"You told me, Pence, that you were Atherton's only near relative. How much of that six hundred thousand goes to you?"

He swallowed a couple times and tried to dodge that question. He started to explain about those other distant relatives. I made him stop, and pinned him down to a clean-cut answer.

"Practically all of it, sir. Five hundred thousand, I should say."

ILL MALLORY got up and tramped heavily at the door and spat down the slope and came back. I couldn't do anything but sit and stare at Pence. He was mopping his forehead and fidgeting painfully in his chair. I guess he was thinking that we figured him the damndest fool we had ever met.

In one way I was thinking just that of him. If his bulldog persistence should happen to be successful, if he should happen to trace young Atherton and find him up the line somewhere working honestly for his salt horse and beans, and should drag him back to that estate, it was a ten-to-one gamble that the lad would soften and ease back into his old ways and take up his vices where he had left them off. But then, Pence was wise. Surely he had thought about that. Probably he was banking on his own ability to keep the lad straight.

In any event, here he was, man-hunting for this young Atherton, this symbol of young wickedness, when success meant that he would be cutting himself out of half a million dollars! Even after I had bored through his reluctance and seen my idea starkly proved, I could not at first believe. On the surface, unselfishness like that looked preposterous. But thinking a moment and looking a little deeper, I began

to understand and to believe it. Half a million dollars sounded like an avalanche boom in my ears, but twenty thousand would have done almost as well with Pence. All he wanted was that degree and a decent living and probably educational advantages for his kids. No doubt young Atherton would have offered him that much at least as a reward, and he could have accepted it. His hunt and all it implied were not a bit more amazing or preposterous than his sixyear attempt to reform young Atherton.

But making all deductions, his act still stood in front of me as the most amazing, most colossal instance of unselfishness I had

ever seen.

It was a question with me whether this Atherton story, which Pence in my esteem was riding to glory on, was going to prove a toboggan for Bill Mallory-a toboggan that would slide him down and out.

"Suppose," I suggested to Pence, "suppose you show Mallory those pictures you showed me, and see if maybe they will re-

call this lad to his mind."

Pence stooped and took them out and handed them to Bill. His hands were fairly quivering as he did so, for this he knew was his last hope, because of the fork of the trail. I was watching closely, to see what Mallory would do. I had decided that if he did not admit the lad came past his place, I would take Pence down to barracks, come back, and force Mallory to tell what had happened. But Bill surprised me.

His eyes lit up as he took the pictures and glanced at them. He appeared very much startled. He was feigning that, of course; he had known all along that the lad who came past his cabin and whose clothes were in his possession was the lad Pence was searching for. The point is, Bill had

had time to cook up a story.

"Great Smokes, yes!" he ejaculated. "I

surelee do remember the boy."

Pence jumped as if he had been hit. He exclaimed something or other; it doesn't

make any difference what.

"But look here, Bill," I said pointedly. "Why didn't you remember him before you saw the pictures? Pence's description of the clothes and of the lad was definite

enough."

"I did remember him," Bill answered "That is, I suspicioned that the boy I remembered was Pence's boy. But I wasn't dead sure—not till them pictures. In a matter like that, seeing how keyed-up

Pence was over him, I didn't want to say

anything till I was dead sure."

That was understandable, all right. And no doubt Bill had wanted to hear the story just the same as I did. But it wouldn't explain his previous silence about the lad's passing there. I expected him to explain that now. And I wasn't going to swallow any story that was manifestly manufactured.

"Tell us what you know about him," I

said briefly.

"I kinda hate to," he said hesitantly, for once looking at Pence, "seeing you thought so much of him, Mr. Pence, and want to find him so bad. But I s'pose you'd find out some other way, mebbe, so I might as well-"

DENCE had a premonition of what was coming. One could see that by the fear and sorrow creeping into his honest

"-might as well tell you now," Bill concluded, after a deep breath. "The young fellow come up here, all right. He was in a mighty pitiful condition. Inside he was all broke up about something. I c'n see now it was about that girl. He had just reached his limit. He was looking for a place to drownd himself. I'm not stretching it—he was wanting to die. His body was all shot, too; and you know how that

affects a fellow's spirits.

"But I'll say this much for him. I know it'll be a mighty comforting thing for you to hear, Mr. Pence. He had cut out dope, cut it out completely. There was a bottle of pain-killer here that's heavy with dope, and he wouldn't touch the stuff. It was an awful terrific fight with him, but he won out. He was off of it; he was off all them things you hinted at. He had won out completely. But in a fight like that where a fellow's fighting ag'inst himself, he pays a big price to win out. It was just like as if he'd cut half of himself away.

"I got mighty well acquainted with him," Bill went on, with a sorrowful, remembering look in his eyes. "I've thought about that boy a hundred times since. It was pitiful-God, it was pitiful! Just when he'd won out completely, for him to- You see, he'd cut all those things away from him. He even said he'd never go back. I don't know what it was he wouldn't go back to, but I see now it was that money. He wouldn't go back to it; he was afraid he might slump. He was that set and determined. Money, even near a million dollars, didn't mean a thing to him in comparison with his own self."

Pence's face was a picture—sorrow, deep and stricken; but shining elation, too.

"This place here," Bill went on in a moment, leading up very gradually and tenderly to what we both foresaw,—"this place here is mighty exactin'. I mean it's a strong place; a fellow either goes down and out in a wink, or he braces up and shakes out of it mighty quick. You seen how that worked with Jimmy Davis last spring, Loring?"

I nodded.

"If the young fellow had had more to build on, he might have stood a chance; for he had a grip of himself, and he had the fighting spunk. But he was too far gone. He kept on fighting to the end—"

I wanted to turn Pence's sorrow aside for a moment at least. I interrupted:

"But this trip across the mountains and up this valley, Bill, ought to have spruced him up some and given him a toe-hold."

"That's what I thought. But my, my goodness,"—Bill shook his head sadly as he looked back at the occasion,—"you didn't see him, Loring. You have no idea—"

Pence got up and went to the door. I saw him reaching furtively for a hand-kerchief as he stepped outside. He didn't want us to see.

I leaned forward closer to Mallory.

"What happened, Bill? He died, didn't he?"

"Yes."

"Haven't you got any of his possessions or anything to prove he died?"

"Why, yes, Loring; I have. I've got his clothes."

He was amazingly frank and openhearted about his admission. His nervousness had left him. He seemed his old self

A number of things were shooting through my mind at that particular moment, but two of them stood out above all the others. One of them was the momentous question involving Bill Mallory. Was he lying? Was his whole story a fabrication? It sounded honest and straightforward; my doubt of him seemed criminal.

But there was the unanswered question of why he had been silent about the lad. His story did not explain that. Though I wanted to believe him, though that belief would have rolled a black load from my shoulders, I could not accept what he said as the whole truth.

I had my own idea of what that truth was. If the lad had stolen the money or aroused Bill's anger by some other dastardly trick, and something had happened,—other than what Bill related,—Bill might possibly be veiling the sorry truth out of compassion for Pence. For me there was small consolation in knowing that, whatever had happened, the wilderness law had justified Mallory.

The other preeminent thing in my mind was a fervent desire to see Pence rewarded, at least materially—rewarded in some way commensurate with his deserts. To see him free of his profession and into another where he would be a success; that is, where he would be happy. Heaven knows, I thought, he would never achieve that freedom himself. He had none of the so-called predatory instincts.

"Bill," I asked, "what made you get up and go over to the door awhile ago?"

"Good Lord, didn't you hear what he said, Loring? You ought to've heard; you dragged it out of him. He's searching for a man he'd lose half a million dollars to find. Aint that enough to stir a fellow?"

"That's how I figured you, Bill. Now what I'm driving at is this: You've got some of this lad's possessions as material evidence. That will go a long ways. If you'll dictate your story to me, and we have the other fellows witness it, do you see what that means, Bill? The document will be worth that half a million to Pence. He'll get it. He'll have to get it!"

Bill looked at me with mild reproach in his eyes. "Why, goodness, Loring, I was meaning to do that. Sure, bring up the fellows and we'll make out the affidavit—"

Pence came back in then. There was a suspicious redness about his eyes, but he was quite calm and collected again. Bill and I both shut up. I guess we felt it would have been indelicate to mention moneymatters to him then. One thing I'm sure of; the thought of that fortune being his, now that Atherton was dead, had never occurred to him.

While he was there, I would not make Bill tell me the truth. And yet I did not want to take Pence down to barracks and come back. The momentous question of Bill's innocence was plain agony, unendurable. I had to know.

As shortly as I could, I drew Pence away and edged him out the door and started down the path. His battered old portfolio was lying forgotten on the bear rug and the two pictures beside it. They meant nothing to him now; he had come to the sorrowful end of his search. For reasons of my own I did not remind him of them or pick them up.

AT the edge of the tiny mountain-side clearing I stopped and told Pence to sit on a boulder there till I went back and

got his portfolio.

As I came within a couple yards of the cabin threshold, the pet fox yapped at me and fled inside. I stepped up on the threshold. Pete the goose was waddling up the cleated slab to his roost, though the sun was still an hour high, making the low, gabbling sounds of a goose with a full craw at sunset.

Bill was standing in the middle of the floor, his body half turned away from me so

that I was looking at his silhouette, and so that the late sun streaming through the window fell upon his shoulders and his shaggy hair. He was standing so still and so intent that he did not hear me; and something in his posture struck me suddenly silent and tongue-tied.

He was holding in one hand the cracked old mirror and in the other the picture of Sidney Atherton. He was talking to himself, in the habit of solitude—speaking hardly above a whisper, but his deep, resonant voice carried to me distinctly.

"I'll sign the affidavit," he was saying.
"I'll swear to it. It'll be worth half a mil-

lion dollars to him."

He paused there a moment, glancing from the picture to his own image in the mirror,

and back to the picture again.

"I'll swear to it," he repeated. "By the Lord, I'll swear to it. And it won't be a lie. That fellow did die. He died six years ago. All hell— Tomm'y himself didn't know me!"



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WHITE MAGIC



ONE TOUGH BIRD, WAS THIS FRIAR PHILLIPS, A MAN WHO WAS DOCTOR, POLICEMAN, JUDGE, AND SOMETIMES GUNMAN FOR A BUNCH OF ESKIMOS, ALL UNDER THE GENERAL CALLING OF MISSIONARY.

by SAMUEL TAYLOR

RIAR PHILLIPS brought the three Kukakas in through the strong cold, brought them in single-handed over the mountains in weather which caused old sourdoughs to hole up. When the party pulled in at Tin Can Henry's trading post, parka hoods were rimmed two inches thick with hoar frost. The post was deserted at the time except for a couple of men in one corner, a pair which Friar didn't waste a glance on, because he was plenty busy with the Kukakas. No sooner were they inside when one Kukaka made a dive and managed to get his manacled hands on a knife lying on the counter. If there's one thing a native can do, it is carve up a man with a knife. Friar Phillips didn't wait for a demonstration. As the Kukaka leaped, Friar was lunging after him, and as the native whirled with the knife, Friar's big right fist smashed to the face. The Kukaka went down limply, the knife clattering to the floor.

"You bully!"

Friar turned, tried to dodge, then slumped in his tracks as the heavy knuckles of a white man crashed against the point of his jaw. His assailant then whipped out a knife and began cutting the rawhide thongs that bound the fur-clad wrists of the Kukakas.

Friar was not entirely unconscious. He writhed there on the floor, as if trying to battle away the numbing effects of the blow. The white man cut the thongs of two of the natives, then turned to the third, who was getting up. The instant his back was towards them, the two free Kukakas leaped on him bearing him to the floor. The third native scooped up the knife he had seized from the counter, and as the white man began struggling to his feet, taking the pair with him, the third Kukaka made a lunge with the knife. Friar's mukluk tangled with the knifeman's legs, and the fellow stumbled, turning the knife towards the one who had tripped him. But Friar was getting his

senses back from the blow, and he squirmed nimbly to one side, seizing the native's arm and guiding the weapon's point into the rough floor as the knife descended. This third Kukaka still had his wrists lashed, but he had a grip on that knife handle with both hands, and he wrenched the blade from the floor and chopped at Friar with it. The knife gleamed with the reflected light of the snow outside as it came in a slashing arc. Friar was on the bottom, at a disadvantage in trying to guide the blade away; there was no use merely parrying the thrusts of the knife, for that was a losing game where the man with the weapon had all the advantage. Friar risked everything in a bold move. Suddenly he released his grip on the native's arms and let all the fellow's weight come atop that knife. As the blade descended, Friar twisted desperately and put his strength behind his fist. His sideways jump was not quick enough and the knife rammed through parka and inner shirt between arm and body and into the floor, the keen edge slicing the torso. But Friar's fist put the man out cold and the northerner jumped up to wade into the other half of the fight.

The white man was having his hands full with the two Kukakas; he was on the floor and the natives were atop, trying to get the knife which he had used to cut their thongs. Friar jerked one of them off and slammed him in the face, knocking him over the counter, then turned to the other, who had wrested the white man's knife away. Friar's mukluk shot out like the kick of a hungry mule and the knife clattered from a numbed wrist, then a mighty blow knocked the native's senses

awav.

"Thanks," said the white man, getting to his knees. "That knife—"

"What's a-goin' on here?" bawled Tin Can Henry, coming in from the rear room.

"I go out a minute an'-"

"Watch them three natives, Henry, while I have a fight," ordered Friar, and he jerked the interfering white man to his feet. The stranger was a husky young fellow, blond of hair and with a shovel jaw.

He grinned. "My mistake, mister. I saw you strike that native, so I butted in,

me not knowing-"

"So you're just around helpin' the downtrodden an' lookin' fer trouble generally!"

The young fellow's smile remained on his face, but his voice came as a pugnacious growl: "I don't apologize more than once, mister. If you're still anxious for a fight, then strip off that parka!"

RIAR'S fur garment was halfway over his head with a single sweep of his arms when abruptly he stiffened, and then very slowly he pulled the parka back on, smoothed it, and turned, meek as a lamb. Merely the sound of his name being called caused the abrupt change in his demeanor. The companion of the young stranger had spoken. He was still sitting at the table in the corner, and had pushed back his parka hood so that a gentle face was visible, a pink countenance with a fringe of white hair around a bald head. Surely no person to make a big, bruising northerner such as Friar Phillips swallow in confusion, except—except that the pink-faced one was Old Man Reed. Old Man Reed had a long title that meant he was supervisor for the Northern Alaskan Missions, while Friar Phillips was a missionary under him.

"Brother Phillips," said Old Man Reed, "this is my son."

Friar gulped again. Old Man Reed continued: "Your district is woefully undermanned, Brother Phillips, and so my son will take over the Kukaka district. I know you would like to accompany him on a preliminary survey trip to advise him and show him the methods which have made you such a signal success. Of course, my son feels fully capable, but I have persuaded him to let you go along the first time."

"Uh—ah—yes, sir," said Friar. "That would be very fine—uh, very—ordinarily. But you see, sir, right now there's trouble in the tribe—"

"Fortunately you arrived just_when I am ready to leave," said Old Man Reed. "I shall be coming through again in about a month and will then receive your report."

That was that. You just don't argue with Old Man Reed. Friar held himself until father and son were outside the trading post saying goodbye, then the northerner said to Tin Can Henry, who was holding a gun on the three Kukakas: "Anybody else—anybody else in the world but the Old Man—and I'd tell him to go tie a sack over his head! They give me a young squirt straight out of divinity

school! They give me that to take charge over the Kukakas!"

Tin Can Henry stopped the mastication of his tobacco cud long enough to ask:

"No, no trouble. Nothin' at all. Just

plenty of whiskey."

Tin Can Henry whistled. Your northerner needs no further explanation of trouble than the combination of whiskey and natives.

"There are four Eskimo brothers mixed up in it, together with some whites," Friar said, nodding at the natives. "I captured these three brothers, but the other one got away. I want you to hold this trio here and send south for Special Officer Bill Grammer. Me, I'll go back up and see what I can do until he arrives. And"-Friar spat out a word highly incompatible with his priestly calling-"and now I've got to take along a wet-eared chechaco, a milk-fed mama's boy, a greenhorn who ought to be put teaching spelling in a mission school—except that he's the Old Man's And so he's sent to take over the Kukaka district, and I'm to be his nursemaid! For half an ounce I'd-"

Friar stopped speaking, for Tin Can Henry had swallowed his tobacco, and was staring at the door. Young Reed had come back in, silently. His shovel jaw was shoved out as he said sweetly: "Brother

Phillips, will you step outside?"

Friar squinted. When a man invites you outside, there's just one thing he means. And Friar was never one to turn down a fight. They went outside and behind the trading post.

"I heard what you said," advised the "And for a few minutes I'd voungster. like us to forget our titles and be just two

men who can't get along. Right?"

Friar jerked his parka off over his head.

"Right!"

"Then, you moss-backed fossil," advised Reed, "take it like a man!" Reed lunged in, knocking Friar backwards and over like a ten-pin, and Friar just sat there and

"Dog-goned if you ain't got spunk, any-

"Get us so I can hit you," rasped Reed.

Friar obliged with a vengeance.

Old man Reed, meanwhile, had stopped his dogs and, leaving the outfit with the Indian driver, came back afoot to say something he had forgotten. Thumping sounds of battle came from behind the trading post as he approached. Cautiously he edged his head around the corner to see his son flounder to the snow from a solid fist-blow.

"So they sent this thing up to preach to

the Kukakas!" scoffed Friar.

Young Reed groggily climbed to his feet, then his leap was as abrupt as an expanding spring. Crash!-"If you figure I wanted to come"-pow!-"or wanted your advice" -slam!-"then think again!"

RIAR met the onslaught as only Friar Could. It was a pretty sight, these two bodies, muscled, strong, lithe, in combat there in the pale glow of the Arctic sun. It was a great setting for a fight, and this pair, bare to the waist, were not being disgraced by the setting.

Friar sent Reed to the ground again, and asked: "Then why did you come, if you

didn't want to?"

Young Reed struggled to an elbow. He was gasping like a river-boat climbing rapids. One eye was swelling shut. "I'll tell you that," he advised, "when you're man

enough to lick me."

Friar laughed. "I'd show you what a lickin' meant, except that I'm in a hurryand I hate to mutilate a child." He pulled his parka on over his head. "And a third reason is that you've got to be able to travel, and travel hard. Brother Reed, we will make a pack for the trip to the Kukakas country."

"Crawlin' into the shell, huh!" growled the young man. He got to his feet, pulled on his parka, and, "Very well, Brother Phillips," he agreed, all sweetness and light, "but remember, we'll settle a score when

we get back."

Old Man Reed ducked back from the

corner of the trading post.

When young Reed and Friar were inside making up a pack, Tin Can Henry said: "I can't hold these here three natives until Bill Grammer gits here, Friar, on account of he already has went up in the Kukaka country."

"Huh? Bill Grammer went north?

When?"

"Dunno. Week ago. Says he heard there was whiskey runnin'."

"If he-Brother Reed, we won't wait until tomorrow morning, we'll start out right now. It looks like trouble!"

"But—how about these three natives—?" wailed Tin Can Henry. "This ain't no jail, an' they'll eat their fool heads off—"
"Put in a bill to the Governor. And hope that it gits paid. If—"

The door burst open. An Eskimo staggered in, grunted something, then fell flat on his face. Friar turned him over. "Whiskey!" Tin Can Henry brought a slug of liquor and with it Friar moistened the frost-blackened lips. The native's face was badly frozen. "It's Wamalak," Friar said. "One of the better element among the Kukakas. I told him to stay and help his people. Why did he make this long trip alone through the strong cold? He didn't even bring a dog team,"

The native opened his eyes, then the stiff lips began mumbling. Friar leaned close

to hear. Soon Wamalak relaxed.

"Didn't say much, and it was all jumbled up. Something about Bill Grammer. Something about the special officer bein' in trouble. Must be bad, to cause that long trip."

"We'll git the whole story when he thaws

out an' wakes up," said the proprietor.

"Build a fire on the ground so we can dig a grave," Friar said. "This man is dead. A bullet had drilled clean through his body, from back to front."

"That's murder!" exclaimed young

Reed.

"That's deduction," admitted Friar Phillips, grimly.

POUR pairs of eyes watched the missionaries leave the trading post and start for the Kukaka country. For over an hour the four waited, and then they made their way down the hill and went in the trading

post.

Tin Can Henry's face went lax as he saw them. It was Just Harding and his crew of whiskey peddlers, and of all the trades of the north country, theirs is the meanest. Tin Can Henry reached under the counter and his hand came out with a big .45 revolver.

"Boys, you can't buy nothing here off from me. Your money's no good and I don't

want your company."

Just Harding was big and affable, with a smile that covered his vicious nature. He just grinned broadly and sat down, saying: "The marshal shoved over my source of liquor. How'd you like to furnish me with whiskey, Hank? I pay you straight retail prices for bulk lots."

"Sure, an' then cut it three times an' dope

it for the native trade," agreed Tin Can Henry, shaking his head. "No, I won't do it, I won't talk to you, an' I won't have you in my place. Now, you git out an' don't—"

Whoom! It was Fritz, the fat German, who shot. That was an old trick of the gang's. Harding would grinningly draw a man's attention while another of the crew got out a gun. The slug batted Tin Can Henry half around and against the wall, but his rusty .45 blasted three times before the lank Luke Swisher mowed him down. Fritz swayed, staggered, then sat down heavily on a bench. His right arm was dangling with a crazy limpness.

"Damn you fer gettin' shot, Fritz!" snarled Harding, his heavy face brutal without the smile. "It'll slow up travel, an' we've got to beat that pair of missionaries to the Kukakas village. "Yakutat," he said to the half-breed, the fourth member of his gang, "open up that back room and let the three Kukakas out. Luke, rob the shelves of anything we need on the trip. And you, Fritz, make a sling for that arm and shut up your whinin'. We've got to circle around and beat Friar and his young pal to the village, or else—"

"Or else the missionaries die as well as Bill Grammer," drawled Luke Swisher.

ROM the post on Lucky Creek the missionaries cut west across the hills to the John River and followed it up into the peaks of the Endicott mountains. fought upwards until they were on the north slope of the Arctic watershed and then turned west and north through the forbidding Brooks Range. It was a land of sparse, scrub vegetation, ragged cliffs and tumbling streams which refused to freeze for long stretches of rapids. Going was tough. They would mush a couple of miles down the frozen bed of a creek and then come to a thundering rapids in a boulder-strewn gulch. Then the portage, having the sledge over slippery rocks or. oftener, relaying the load on man and dogback.

Young Reed toughened up until he could hold his own with Friar, and that's saying something. They'd been traveling six days when he asked: "When do we come into the Kukakas country, Brother Phillips?"

"This is it. We've been trailed by a

party of natives all day."

Reed's eyes widened. "Trailing us? But—" He gulped.

Friar said with a shrug: "Only reason they ain't shot at us, I reckon, is on account of me bein' a missionary, and shootin' missionaries is bad medicine. They've been awful careless about showin' theirselves, so I figure they're drinkin'."

"We'd better go back for reinforce-

ments!"

Friar explained patiently: "Bill Grammer is a special officer to control the illegal liquor traffic with the natives, see? He's up here somewheres, yet the natives are drunk. That means either Grammer is dead or he's prisoner, and we're finding out. Anyhow, it's a missionary's job to stop liquor traffic, and we're after the brother of the three men I took down to the trading post, as well as the Just Harding gang."

"Look! Up on that ridge-"

Friar knocked down the hand. "Ain't

polite to point."

It was dark when the snarling approach of half-starved dogs denoted the vicinity of a native village. Friar went ahead with the whip. "Keep your gun handy," he ad-"These half-wolves would as soon rip your throat as not."

Reed gripped his revolver and nervously watched the encircling ring of blood-thirsty "Somethin' up," grunted Friar, "Otherwise the whole population would be out to meet us, jabberin' like magpies."

They made their way directly to the largest hut in the village. Light showed through the cracks from inside, but no sound emerged. Friar lifted the skin door curtain and ducked inside. About thirty natives were in the place, seated on the sleeping platform built around the wall. Friar grunted an order in the native dialect and one of the Eskimos lumbered out to tend the dog team. Reed came in, coughing as he entered the foul air.

"What's the gosh-awful smell?"

"Sweat, fish, tobacco, filth-and rot-gut whiskey."

"Brother Phillips what are you going to do?"

"Me? Why, you come up here to Go ahead. It's a good stall." preach.

Reed made a stab at it. Heat was terrific. Sweat glistened on the brown bodies, bare to the waist both male and female; steam formed a cloud around their heads and slowly seeped out the little hole in the roof. Friar watched the shifty-eyed natives intently. Reed forgot his smattering of native dialect and as he warmed into his speech dropped into American.

"Hey, white man!" It was a voice from

"Bill Grammer!" involuntarily exclaimed Friar.

Every native tensed. Reed stopped in the middle of a sentence. Silently, a group of half-baked natives blocked the low dooropening. Apparently without looking at them Friar advanced, mittens dangling by the strings, big fists clenched. Reed followed. One by one the Eskimos quailed under Friar's approach, and the two whites crawled through the doorway.

Around the big hut were grouped a number of smaller ones. Two natives with rifles were guarding the entrance to one. As Friar went toward it the guards leveled their rifles. Another native leaped in front

of Friar.

"If go in-no come out," he grunted.

Reed stepped in and smashed the native in the face, felling him. Instantly the whole tribe closed in. Back to back the whites fought, hammering away the surging faces. "That was a silly trick!" rasped Friar. With a sweep of his arm he knocked aside three Kukakas. "Old Man told you to ask my advice!"

"Sorry, Brother Phillips. What do we do now?"

The Eskimos came in with a rush. advise you," grunted Friar as a horde bore him under, "t' do the best you can." The

Kukakas piled on in a heap.

Bruised and sore, relieved of their weapons, they were shoved through the opening of the hut they had been forbidden to enter. A lamp constructed of a tin can half filled with oil with a floating rag as a wick was suspended from the roof. On the sleeping-platform was a reclining white

"Hello, Bill Grammer," Friar greeted. "You're a big help in a fight."

"Sorry, Friar. But I got a bullet hole in my leg."

"Whiskey trouble, I reckon."

"Ye-ah. Caught Just Harding an' his crew red-handed, but they made fight an' got away after I was plugged. One of the gang was killed-an' just my luck it was a member of the tribe."

"The one called Alunick?" Friar asked quickly.

"How'd you know?"

"I took his three brothers down to Tin

Can Henry's trading post just before you showed up here."

BILL GRAMMER laughed. "Is that a relief! They've been holdin' me until the brothers got back from a huntin' trip. And now it's a cinch they won't git back, if they're down in the trading post. Old Tin Can Henry will hold 'em until there's ice a foot thick in hell, so's he can pad up a big bill to the Territory for food and keep!"

Reed asked: "But why is the tribe hold-

ing you?"

Bill Grammer frowned, as if not understanding how a man could be so dumb. "Blood revenge. Simple. You kill Eskimo; Eskimo kill you. Old native custom."

"But-but that barbaric idea is no longer

practiced!"

"You'd better inform the tribe that they're old-fashioned," Grammer advised.

"Then why haven't they killed you al-

ready?" young Reed persisted.

"Let me tell him," Friar sighed patiently, "I'm used to it. Now, you see, youngster, the brothers of the dead have the privilege of takin' revenge, understand? The tribe don't know that I took three of the brothers down to the trading post. Thinkin' the three are just out huntin', the tribe waits for 'em to get back. And for us two, seein' as how we poked our noses in where we was told to keep out, we'll also be eliminated, followin' another good, old-fashioned custom of leavin' no witnesses to talk. See? Or shall I explain it all again?"

"Brother Phillips," rasped Reed, his face white around the jaws, "I ain't used to bein' alked to like a kid! If you'll jerk that

Jarka-"

Friar obliged. "All right, you sensitive

young whelp!"

It was impossible for the tall men to stand erect in the hovel. Crouching, jaws out, they circled like a pair of fighting cocks, and when they dived at one another the feathers flew. They threw a dozen smashing blows and then went to the hardpacked floor in a fighting tangle. Grammer watched from the sleeping platform. reached in a pocket and pulled out two quarters which he set before him about six inches apart. Young Reed was on top, fists thudding in Friar's face like a posthole tamp. Grammer took the left-hand quarter and put it atop the one on the right. Then Friar flung the young fellow

off and scrambled atop, arms driving. Grammer moved both quarters to the left. Native dogs were whining outside, voices rising. Reed shoved Friar away and both were kneeling, throwing smashing blows. Shrugging, Grammer put the money back in his pocket.

"No bet there; it's a toss up!"

Kukakas scrambled through the low opening with rifles. The fight stopped.

"Sorry we can't keep on," Friar said. "Not half as sorry as me, Brother Phil-

lips," advised young Reed.

They were ordered outside and into the big meeting house. Before it was a newly arrived sledge outfit, and inside, in addition to the natives, was Just Harding and his gang, together with the three brothers of the dead man whom they had brought from the trading post. Harding, big beefy, smiling, was seated with a four-gallon jug of whiskey between his knees. The lank Luke Swisher and the half-breed, Yakutat, were on his left, while the fat German, Fritz, was hunched on the right, clutching a dangling arm. "Tried t' beat you here. Friar," said Harding. "If we could've finished off Grammer before you showed up, you wouldn't need to be killed. But . . .

Upon setting the wounded Grammer down, Friar went directly to the fat German, ignoring the three native brothers. who had risen with long knives in their

"Fritz, what's the matter with that

"Noddings," grunted the fat man stolidly. His face was red with fever. The three brothers approached, knives ready. Friar gave the threatening Kukakas a single preoccupied glance, reached out and took the knife from one of them.

"Thanks." He slit the German's left parka sleeve to the shoulder. The bones of the forearm had been shattered by Tin Can Henry's bullet, and the member hung loosely. A rude tourniquet of rawhide had been applied just above the elbow to stop the bleeding. Below the cinching thong

the arm was black.

"Sharpen up this knife," Friar ordered, handing the weapon back to one of the brothers, who were standing around uncertainly. "Fritz, it's a wonder you're alive. That arm will have to come off, and right away . . . Just Harding, you get some water hot . . . You, Luke Swisher, go out and find what happened to my sledge and

get the medical kit . . . Brother Reed, clean off a place on that sleeping platform . . . Yakutat, see if you can happen onto a hack-saw someplace."

Reed asked: "Brother Phillips, do you

have a medical license?"

Friar shot him a swift glance. "You'll find out a real missionary has more to do than sing hymns an' preach. . . . Here, Fritz, this is one time when I'd say a man needed whiskey, and a lot of it."

N HOUR later the job was done. Just Harding held out a big paw. "Thanks, Friar. I think a lot o' old Fritz. I'm right sorry that you'll have to be put out of the way, but you know how it is—witnesses—." He shrugged, and signaled to the three brothers. Then the big man stiffened, the affable smile freezing on his beefy face, as a half dozen rifles jabbed in his back. Luke Swisher and Yakutat also were surrounded by guns. Weapons were taken from the whiskey peddlers.

"What's up?" whispered Reed.

Friar was smiling grimly. "To an Eskimo, a white man is a white man. Reckon Harding didn't figure on that. Natives don't leave witnesses."

Young Reed's mouth was tight. "Is

there—can't we do something?"

Friar rubbed his nose. "If you don't bold the cards, then bluff," he advised, and presently he pulled a magnificent bluff. As the official avengers, the three Kukaka brothers had first chance at the Dutch courage in the big jug, and they needed a lot of it. One of them jerked the cork out, and then Friar bluffed.

"No touch!" he roared, pointing at the jug. Of course, every one of the Kukakas must have heard at least once the stock missionary speech against the use of liquor; but what Friar thundered in the native tongue was entirely different. He didn't merely damn whiskey in general, he put a curse on that particular jug. He used four languages to curse that liquor, and maybe even he didn't know what all the words meant, but they rumbled horrifyingly.

There was not a sound except the hiss of breathing when Friar finished. The eyes of the native with the jug were wide with

fear of the unknown.

"By golly, it might work!" hissed Reed. The sound of the voice broke the tension. The native shrugged, hefted the jug and took a drag.

"Will you learn to keep that big mouth shut, youngster?" rasped Friar. Then his voice rose in another curse and his finger pointed like a sword on the Kukaka. As if a bullet had shot from the finger the native clapped hands to his stomach and rolled on the ground, vomiting. The other two brothers had swigged of the jug and Friar's finger pointed twice more and they went down, retching. The remainder of the tribe screamed with terror. They prostrated themselves at Friar's feet, and the missionary was above them like the figure of eternal wrath. Several Eskimos who had not tasted the whiskey began to vomit, either through fear or sympathetic sensation or a combination of the two. All were clutching their bellies and moaning for mercy. Friar told them they all would die. Every bite of food would come back up and they would starve amidst plenty.

And then one of the natives, his empty stomach straining to give up its very lining, got a simple and obvious idea. If the Eskimo vengeance on the whites was forgiven, could the white man's curse on the

Eskimos be taken away?

HEY had been gone a month to the day when young Reed and Friar pulled in at the trading post on Lucky Creek. Tin Can Henry was up and about again, though using a crutch. With an armed escort special officer Bill Grammer had taken the whiskey peddlers south. Over a dinner of biscuits, beans, bacon and coffee, Reed said: "You never did explain about how you made them natives sick."

"You never asked," grinned Friar. "It was apomorphine hydrochloride from my medicine kit. I slipped a speck of it in the whiskey jug after I'd doped the German for the operation."

Reed nodded sweetly. "Dad is due any time now, an' he'll want a report on what you've showed me. As you practice it, the duties of the missionary consist of being policeman, doctor, judge, and anything else which might fit the occasion. You use science, superstition, emotion, and magic both white and black. But what kind of religion do you preach?"

"All kinds."

The young man grinned calculatingly. "Maybe you don't realize that our denomination preaches *one* kind of religion."

Friar squinted. "Oh! So that's the kind

of report the wet-eared boy will give to his dad, is it?"

"Friar," invited young Reed, "will you

step outside?"

SO THEY went around to the rear of the cabin, stripped down to the waist and started to fight. Reed sent a terrific smash that staggered Friar. "Now, I'll tell you somethin'," he growled. "My dad sent me up here fer two reasons. You know one. The other was 'cause he figured I was cock-sure and wild. He figured you'd tame me. You tame me! 'Fore I'm finished, you won't be able to crawl!"

Friar roared into the attack, and then Reed went backwards into the snow. "All right, youngster! Whatever report you've a mind to make is your affair. I do my job any way I can, and if the Old Man sent you with me to git you tamed, then

I'll do that, also!"

Young Reed scrambled to his feet with a snarl; then his arms dropped as he looked past Friar's shoulder.

Old Man Reed was standing by the cor-

ner of the trading post.

"We—uh—we were taking exercise," mumbled young Reed.

Old Man Reed's pink face beamed.

"Very fine, son!"

Young Reed continued: "And—well, Dad, I figure I ought to get a little more experience before I tackle the Kukaka district single handed. Maybe I'm not so cocky as I was a month ago, and maybe I've got a few new ideas I want to think over."

Friar's chest swelled with pride.

Young Reed turned to him. "And you, Brother Phillips, I'll see you again—and show you some methods of my own."

"I'll be waitin'," promised Friar.

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THE SMALLEST OF A PACK OF MALAMUTES WAS THIS PUP—HE WAS SHORT ON LEGS, BUT LONG ON BRAINS AND GUTS—AND THEY CALLED HIM

The Runt

Cliff Campbell

"I'M AFRAID we'll have to drown the runt of the bunch!" announced Dean, with obvious reluctance. There was an expression of deep regret on his strong face as he contemplated the playful group of puppies. An even dozen there were—sturdy little Malemutes, awkward in movement; feet seemingly many sizes too large; baby teeth as sharp as needles and as white as snow, gleaming from pink jaws.

They snapped and growled in their play, tugging at any ear, leg, tail that happened to be conveniently within reach. Each lived in the happy present, as children do. The future lay ahead, a life of long days tugging at heavy sleds over heavier trails, facing the rigors of Arctic winters, of gnawing at the ice balls that formed on their pads, of sleeping on their ration of frozen fish, so the heat of their bodies would thaw it sufficiently to eat, of serving mankind as it is given no other breed to serve.

Of the pack of heavy-coated puppies, the one usually beneath the others, the one with the brightest eyes, the shortest legs, yet by far the most intelligent and active despite his physical handicap, was the Runt. In the days that were to come, when perhaps Dean's very life depended upon the strength of his dogs, the Runt would be a liability. It is the unwritten law of the frozen regions that only the strong of heart and body shall survive, a natural law that governs all living things.

As Dean would have stood out from a group of rugged men, so did the dogs he bred stand out from the others. In the man's make-up was a deep love for dogs, any kind and size of dog, even the mangy mongrels of the alleys; but above all he loved Malemutes. His love and sympathy urged him to permit the Runt to live; but



the law of the land, which knows not the meaning of love and sympathy, ordered otherwise, and he knew the Runt must go.

"Hang it all," he growled, "I'll have to drown him!" He was silent for a moment, then added desperately, "or something. He'll eat his share of food, but he can't do his share of the work and that is a burden on the others."

"By Gar!" protested Le Mar, the French-Canadian who planned to winter in with Dean, "you no kill those pup! He's the smartest feller in the bunch!"

"It's pretty tough all around," Dean replied, "but you can see he's a runt. He'll never be a big dog. His legs will always be short. If I lived in town I wouldn't care; but up here, where every pound of food counts, it's different. He's got to go, poor little cuss!"

For the first time the Runt noticed the two men. His fellow pups immediately became a minor consideration. He scrambled and squirmed through the irresponsible pack, spilled over the last and landed nose foremost in the dirt, simply because his forelegs were not long enough to prevent such a mishap. He squatted down upon his haunches and eyed Dean quizzically, cocking his head first to right, then to left. When LeMar spoke, his attention was turned instantly toward him. He waited patiently for some sign of recognition from the men. None forthcoming his eyes brightened with a roguish gleam and he reared his body upward, nipping at Dean's bootlace with his sharp teeth. Then, his none too steady legs giving way beneath him, he tumbled into a flurry heap; but he still held to the bootlace, his eyes rolling in quaint humor until the whites showed. This was real sport, far superior to biting another pup's tail or leg.

"Aw! Aw!" murmured LeMar, "the

leetle Runt, by Gar!"

"You win!" exclaimed Dean. "I simply can't do it now! Feast or famine, we'll find enough for you to eat, even if I have to share mine."

HROUGH the long, balmy days of a glorious Alaskan summer, the Runt vied with his brothers in the matter of food consumption. Twice a day Dean placed great quantities of food before the growing pups. A mad scramble, a few gulps, and it had vanished, leaving each pup hungrier than before. Despite his handicap, the

Runt secured his share. Perhaps the strength of the food went to develop his brain, to make his bright, humorous eyes still brighter; certainly his body did not develop to any appreciable degree. He grew, of course, but the others developed by leaps and bounds.

"Look at those legs," commented Dean one day. "If I didn't know otherwise, I'd say there is a strain of the dachshund in

him."

"By Gar," responded Le Mar; "look at those bright eyes—smartest feller . . ."

"Don't I know it?" interrupted Dean.
"If he only had a body to match that brain
of his, what a wonderful lead dog he would
make!"

The others gradually took on names. There was "Moose," so named because he was the biggest of the several litters; and "Shorty," and "Mike," and "Cultus," the bad dog, and "Skookum," who was strong. And the smallest of all was the "Runt."

At an age when pups of warmer climes are taught to heel, drop, and ho, the Malemutes were fitted with small harnesses attached to a block of wood, which they dragged over the grass as they learned that "Gee!" meant swing to the right, "Haw!" to the left, "Mush on!" to go, and "Whoa!" to stop. Often Dean carried a whip, but their woolly backs never felt the bite of the lash—never would in fact. Dean's method of training was different. The pistol-like cracks were used to emphasize commands and not to force obedience through fear.

The Runt viewed the training of his fellows with interest, while his active brain speculated on the reason why his shoulders were never fitted with a harness, why he was not permitted the joy of this fascinating new game. Perhaps his stout little heart felt a twinge of unhappiness when he was not allowed to join with his brothers in dragging the block. The Malemute pup instinctively enjoys work, and when in leash will lunge forward and pull for all his worth, making even a strong man extend himself to hold the dog in check. The Runt did the next best thing, he trailed behind the others. Without knowing it, he had taken an optimistic view of life. Early he had discovered that a pup with very short legs could keep pace with one of long legs by the simple expedient of taking two steps to one. Logical enough, was the Runt's way of reasoning, and he followed it.

Shortly before the snow fell, the Runt found himself in his first real fight. how it started none of the half-grown dogs knew, but Cultus was supposed to have been the instigator. The Runt found himself at the bottom of the snarling pack. Dean burst from the cabin, a warlike peacemaker. To his amazement, the Runt held the field very much to himself. The battle was over as suddenly as it had begun. A number of pups were nursing minor wounds; others were pondering on the futility of warfare; but the Runt, still somewhat dazed, was experiencing the sweetness of his first victory. Literally the under dog, he had turned disadvantage to advantage and made the most of his position.

Dean noticed a change from that day. When the irresponsible pack took a notion to romp afield, the Runt assumed leadership and the others trailed along behind. At such times he would make his stubby legs move at top speed, though his brothers

cantered along without effort.

"Poor little devil!" whispered Dean one day as the pack returned after an absence of nearly three hours down the creek. "He's a natural leader, but his little heart is too stout for his short legs." The others were still in a playful mood, but the Runt was exhausted. None had disputed his leadership, but it had cost him heavily in

strength.

With the coming of the first snow the old dogs read the signs. After a summer of ease, work would now begin. There were several long trips for supplies to the distant mining camp, as well as shorter trips. Dean usually bagged a moose in the fall and hauled the meat to camp with the team. To obtain sufficient fish for his team during the winter, he would make a number of excursions to Fish Lake.

HE RUNT was the first of the half-grown dogs to scent the unusual. He romped around as Dean brought forth the sled and harnessed the old dogs; then he manifested extreme hopefulness, as several of the younger dogs were harnessed beside their elders. This was the final course previous to actual work with the sled. It taught them to perform real work, to pull with the others, to swing with them, and instilled the first feeling of pride and responsibility.

The Runt's spirits ebbed; but he was not yet beaten. He floundered through the

fresh snow at top speed and barely held his A hundred yards from the cabin Dean stopped, and to the Runt's ears came the cruelest words he had ever heard: "Go on home! Go back, Runt!" Dean had spoken them kindly at first; then, as the Runt squatted down in the snow to argue the point, a new and severe note crept into his voice, but the Runt stood fast. The others were bound on a new adventure, why not he? True, it was a different sort of trail than he had traversed in the summer, and a dog's legs sometimes sunk into this soft, cold white stuff until it quite reached his middle; but if a dog kept constantly at it, wouldn't he get somewhere? He most certainly would.

"Go on back!"

Disgraced and disappointed, the Runt bowed his head in shame, but his stubby, determined legs did not move.

"Hey! Le Mar!" shouted Dean, "come and get the Runt! He wants to go along, and the little devil is floundering in snow

to his belly already."

With pipe gripped firmly between his teeth, Le Mar emerged from the cabin, a kindly grin upon his face. "By Gar, those Runt, one smart pup!" commented the man, and he caught up the Runt by the scruff of his neck and carried him to the cabin, an inglorious, limp, crestfallen object. From the corner of his eye the Runt had seen the team leap into the harness in response to Dean's "Mush on!" had watched his ungainly fellows emulate their elders; and every unharnessed pup romp happily in the sled's wake, an ecstatic pack enjoying their first real trail experience.

For several minutes after Dean had vanished, Le Mar regarded the Runt sympathetically, then muttering something in French he donned his parka and called the Runt to follow. Outside, he fitted a small harness to the Runt's shoulders, attached it to a small piece of wood, then set off, carefully breaking a trail about the cabin. The Runt followed happily; never had life been sweeter than at that moment. And when Le Mar quit after a half hour of it, the Runt was still ready for more.

But the kindly Le Mar could not always give time to the Runt's entertainment when the others were away. The hateful words "Go back Home!" came frequently, and seared the impression of disgrace on the Runt's active brain. He did not understand why; but he sensed he was not

wanted. Above all, he wanted to serve the big, friendly man who was always kind except for this one thing.

Now that they were working, the halfgrown dogs cared less for aimless excursions about the cabin. The Runt was still their acknowledged leader, and when he trotted away they followed dutifully enough, but they would have preferred the comfort of the kennel.

Twice, when Dean made short trips, the fateful "Go back home!" did not fall on the Runt's ears. Instead, the man smiled and said, "Come along, Runt!" His joy at this was boundless, and death itself in this man-god's service would have been sweet. The trips were far too short, which, if he had known it, was the reason he was permitted to accompany the others.

When the lakes and rivers were frozen and the grip of the Arctic winter lay heavy on the land, Dean prepared for an extended trip to Fish Lake. It was a day's mushing from the cabin, and he would remain about a week, depending upon his

luck in securing fish.

"It's quite a trip," commented Dean, "but I haven't got the heart to leave the Runt behind. He does enjoy trail work so, and the loyal little fellow is lots of company. I'll take him with me and when he tires he can ride on the sled; the trail is pretty well packed anyway, and the going for short-legged pups accordingly is much easier."

Le Mar watched the interesting expedition's start two days later. Dawn of the short day was still far away as Dean cracked his whip. A team of seven dogs settled down as one, the sled lunged forward, and with a final wave of his hand he was off. Close to his heels followed the Runt, and trailing behind him were eleven other pups.

E MAR remained standing motionless in the doorway until the last pup had vanished from view, then entered the cabin and settled down for a week of loneliness. In the winter kennel beneath the cabin his own team quarreled among themselves over real and fancied wrongs.

Dean's Malemutes were equal to averaging six miles an hour over a good trail with a light load. This morning, with the Runt's short legs in mind, he cut down the speed to four miles an hour, and broke trail across country until he came to the river

bank, five miles away. Below, the frozen stream lay gleaming in the first light of dawn. Descending to its inviting surface he lifted the Runt to the sled and set off at top speed. He could make real time now and reach the fishing camp, thirty-three miles ahead, by night, provided the pups could maintain the pace. It would be a good test of their physical strength and courage.

Shortly after noon Dean passed the blazed tree on the river bank that marked the twenty-three-mile point. The team was still fresh, tails curled over their back, tireless. The pups no longer cavorted about, but plodded steadily, stopping occasionally to investigate some vagrant and mysterious odor that chanced to reach their curious nostrils; then to race like a pack of young

wolves to overtake the sled.

In a land where fortune smiles when least expected, tragedy strikes without warning. One moment, the cold silence of the land was broken only by the soft padding of many feet and the gliding of the sled runners; the next, the sickening, sinister crack of shattering ice broke the stillness. The sled reared upward, jerking the startled team to an abrupt standstill. Beneath the ice, sinking slowly from the weight of man and sled, the waters ran swiftly and dark. Dean, clinging to the sled with desperation, felt the water creep up his legs half way to the knees, while its icy chill drove away all sensation after the first shock.

"Steady," he cried sharply; then, "Mush on!"

The note of calmness in the ringing cry steadied the team. In unison the dogs settled down and pulled-pulled until each back bowed and each belly touched the ice from the strain, while toes dug for footing and held. The load slipped from the lashings and tumbled toward Dean, the Runt rolling helplessly with the rest. In the brief moment that ice cakes and sled jammed, Dean hurled the Runt clear, tossed a bundle of precious birch bark after him, then leaped in himself. The reaction as he leaped broke the jam. The sled, caught by the current, was sucked beneath the ice, pulling the wheelers in with it. For one brief instant the others held. then, as the strain became too great, one gave way, and with him went the others. Dean landed on his hands and knees, his right leg clear; the left, half in the water, cracked against the ragged edge of the break. Something snapped, a sickening pain surged through his body, the world turned red for the briefest moment, then his vision cleared. Once before he had experienced the pain of a broken leg, and now he read the signs rightly. The ice about him was cracking beneath the strain, though here it was thick enough to bear his weight. He crawled clear by a supreme effort. The lead dog alone remained above the surface, paddling with desperation; then his hind quarters were pulled under, his fore paws splashed an instant longer, then vanished.

The deep, stinging bite of the frost was already at work on Dean's wet feet and Fascinated for an instant, he saw the glaze of ice forming on his moccasins. He had known what would happen the instant the air touched his wet feet. feet and legs would soon become blocks of ice; then, with that slow assurance with which a glacier moves down a valley, the frost would work up. Breaking through the ice—the tragedy he had escaped so many times-had come at last! And he was alone, except for the pups. The Runt came close and thrust a cold nose forward as if offering sympathy. The others squatted about, their heads cocked at guizzical angles, as if seeking to understand it all.

Never had Dean's need of the assistance of a fellow man been greater. He crawled to the bundle of birch bark, then noticed for the first time that he still retained his

whip.

Gripping the bark and whip he commenced to crawl over the ice to shore. Each movement required a special effort to execute. Behind, slowly following, came

the pups, the Runt leading.

Even while the frost worked relentlessly upward Dean managed to force back the terror that leaped again and again into his mind; each movement was made with the calmness and deliberation of desperation. Ages later he reached the shore. To a point where last summer's floods had piled the driftwood high, he made his way.

With his mitted hands he tore at the shattered bits of wood, pulling away slivers and sticks that would blaze readily, until

at last he had a formidable pile.

ARDLY breathing, he watched the yellow flame flicker a moment, then burst into a fierce blaze as the bark flared

up. It licked the wood so carefully piled above it and spread until the whole mass was ablaze. The lighter stuff would go quickly but the heavy logs of the tangled mass would burn for hours. And then? With the optimism of those of the North he gratefully accepted even a short lease of life, and commenced the slow task of stirring the circulation in his feet.

With his knife he cut and hacked the moccasins and socks away, until his bare feet were exposed to view, bloodless, and strangely white. "It's not so bad," he whispered, "not so bad; if somebody

should come along and help me."

The Runt, squatting on his haunches, watched the preliminary process of thawing with snow, his alert eyes following every movement. The other pups, stretched

upon the snow, were resting.

The spark of life within Dean had always burned brightly, but it never burned brighter, nor struggled harder, than it did at that moment when the agony of restored circulation commenced to torture his limbs. His great strength and determination had pulled him through so far; but it was maddening, this thought of winning out against the frost by his own efforts only to die of hunger and cold because of his helplessness. With his old dog team standing by, he could have crawled to the sled, wrapped himself in his robes, and the wise old Malemute lead-dog would have taken him safely home

Yes, the old team would have taken him safely home. Some day, when the pups had grown up they would be trained the same way; but now they were still irresponsible, playful youngsters, the Runt alone displaying hints of the wisdom and leadership of the older dogs. Dean glanced up at the Runt, and when he looked into the little fellow's bright eyes, the answer to his problem came. It was a long chance, but the only one. Perhaps in the Runt's brain the instinctive knowledge that enables the old dogs to find and follow a snowcovered trail over frozen lake and river, had developed sufficiently to meet this emergency successfully. Banking heavily on one natural instinct. Dean would be going up against an even stronger, the inbred instinct that causes a dog to remain with man to the end.

Dean was not one to fear the test. With a sweep of his arm toward back trail he spoke in a low, sharp tone: "Go back home, Runt!" The Runt's erect ears drooped suddenly; the misery of his soul was pictured in his expressive eyes. joy of the day was gone forever, yet he hesitated. Something was wrong with this man-god of his who crawled about on his hands and knees, and whose face frequently turned white from pain. The Runt was quite certain his place was here with the man and not at home, miles away. His fellows bestirred themselves and squatted about in a circle, waiting for a move from the Runt. Dean contemplated for a moment the circle of pups, erect ears forming triangles on each side, of their quizzical faces, eyes bright and expectant. The Runt alone drooped.

"Go back home!" said Dean again. new note crept into his tone. Ordinarily, the Runt would have leaped to obedience, but now he stubbornly stood his ground. His place, he knew, was with the man. Twice more Dean repeated the command,

then he reluctantly caught up the whip.
"Go on home!" he shouted for the last time, emphasizing his words with a crack of the whip. "I got to do it!" he groaned.

The lash whistled through the air and cracked like the shot of a pistol; a tuft of soft fur vanished from the Runt's woolly back. In an instant the wolf strain in the Runt's veins leaped to the front. Lips lifted in a snarl, baring baby fangs; his fur bristled in rage, his defiance magnificent. Then the domestic routed the wild, he whined a mute plea and shivered, turned very slowly and walked away. The others followed silently. On the ridge, a hundred yards distant, he paused and looked back, the others grouped about him. Dean, tears in his eyes, watched the twelve youthful faces a moment, then waved them on. The Runt searched about uncertainly for an instant, then picked up the trail and trotted from view.

E MAR was up to his old tricks. Like many Alaskans, he had laid up a stock of magazines in consecutive numbers for the long winter. The words, "To be continued," at the end of an instalment never annoyed LeMar. He merely picked up the next number and continued reading. A thriller had gripped his interest and it was fully two o'clock in the morning; but he continued to read on.

Below, his dogs stirred uneasily, then, without the least apparent reason, one of them howled the mournful, wolfish note of the Malemute. Far in the distance came an answering howl. "By Gar!" exclaimed

Le Mar. "Those pup!"

The return of the pups could mean but one thing-disaster of some nature had overtaken the older dogs and Dean. The pups would never return of their own accord. He hurriedly put on his clothing, grasped a flashlight and stepped out. Into the white gleam staggered the Runt. He dropped in his tracks, the others, tails dragging, heads hanging from exhaustion, followed their leader's example. For one brief moment Le Mar regarded the pups as if he expected them to tell the story he sensed, then he drove the tired pack into the cabin and called out his own team and harnessed them to the sled. Onto the sled went plenty of robes, a first-aid kit, provisions and other articles his experience told him might be of use. Still, the load seemed incomplete. He rubbed his parka hood with his hand and gazed doubtfully. "By Gar!" he exclaimed suddenly, "those Runt!" Le Mar ran back to the cabin and returned with the Runt, whom he tossed on top of the robes.

For this night's run Le Mar replaced the lean collie he used as a lead-dog to speed up the team, with a wise old Malemute, one that Le Mar declared could find a trail

where none existed.

The team, dragging the light load through the night, jerked the driver along at top speed. Sometimes he rode short stretches in order to rest, but usually he gripped the handles of the sled and raced behind. In the gloom, a few feet away, he could make out the form of the Runt, sleeping the slumber of the just.

At seven o'clock, with the dawn of the short day still two hours away, the lead dog stopped and commenced to sniff uncertainly. The trail ended. Le Mar walked ahead cautiously and located the spot where the team had broken through, then shook his head sadly. The hole was frozen over, but the signs of the tragedy were there in plenty.

"By Gar!" he whispered softly; "Dean . he . . ."

The Runt leaped from the sled, gazed about uncertainly for one brief instant, then glanced up at Le Mar as if to say, "Here! what are you wasting time for?"

"Hey, Runt!" shouted Le Mar excitedly,

"what you try to tell me, huh!"

But the Runt did not waste words. He located himself at that instant and was away at top speed. Le Mar circled the thin ice and followed. Around the nearest point he caught sight of the glow of charring logs. As he neared, a form straightened up, then into the light leaped the Runt. For an instant he hesitated gripped by doubt, then, as Dean opened his arms, he threw himself forward, his tail wagging furiously, his cold muzzle thrust against the man's cheek. Dean stifled a groan that came from the sudden movement of his leg and hugged the happy form of the Runt to his breast. The pup's body shivered with a joy that was boundless, while his loyal little heart pounded ecstatically.

Something, he knew not what, told him that he had rendered a signal service, and that this wonderful man-god was grateful. What matter if other pups were harnessed to sleds with the big dogs to make mysterious trips abroad? Never had a dog, large or small, been hugged as the Runt was being hugged at that moment.

Into the light came La Mar, his parka glistening white with frost. "By Gar, those

Runt—" he began happily.

"You bet-those Runt!" rejoined Dean

brokenly.

"Huh!" grunted Le Mar. Then after a long pause, "Huh! By Gar, one dam babee!" And he roughly brushed away a tear with his mitted hand.

Hotter Than the Hammers of Hell!! Newer Than Tomorrow's Headlines!!

READ

"SPAIN GONE MAD!"

By LARRY HARRIS

A novel of blood and gun thunder and lust in Spain . . . the Spain of today and tomorrow . . . the Spain about which you read in your newspapers. A story that reeks with chaos and passion and hatred . . . hatred of men for their owners and oppressors. A story of women and children in arms . . . fighting, dying, rather than to submit to slavery. A story so true, so real, so burning, that the part played by the men who tucked dynamite into their belts, lighted the fuses with cigars, and flung themselves into the midst of their enemies, to act as human bombs, is just a minor incident.

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As well as stories by
PETER B. KYNE, WILL F. JENKINS, and S. OMAR BARKER

Dthe



The purpose of this department is to help the readers of REAL NORTHWEST ADVENTURES make friends with people everywhere. We encourage correspondence. Just write to Corporal Smith at Room 203, 100 Hudson Street, New York City, and sign your own name or nickname. We'll print your letter, and if you don't want your address to appear, send it confidential to us, and we will forward all answers to you.

So come on, pick yourself a pen pal from those listed below; they're all anxiously awaiting your letters.

WANTS EVERYONE TO WRITE

Dear Corporal Smith:

I am a lonesome boy and I would like to have

Pen Pals from all over to write to me. I am

18 years old and I have blue eyes and black
hair and I am 5 feet 4 inches tall, so will you

all swite to me. all write to me.

Yours truly, FRANK FLASK.

Centerville, Idaho.

HE'LL ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS

HE'LL ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS
I have just got through reading your magazine and like it very much. How about entering me in on some of your great Pen Pals.
I would like to hear from pen pals all over the world. Will exchange snapshots with anyone, so come on gals, I'll be waiting. I am 5 ft. 8 in. tall, brown hair, brown eyes, wt., 153 lbs. Will answer any questions concerning South Dakota and North Dakota.

Yours truly,
OHESTER L. SCOVILLE.

ours truly, CHESTER L. SCOVILLE.

Bruce, So. Dak.

HE KNOWS HIS BUSINESS

Listen Corporal:
To my plea for Pen Pals who love the Northwest Stories as I do.
Say, can't you get that Editor to give us more prospecting stories, and stories of the old gold

You readers that are old enough to appreciate these Northwest Stories and like the west and Nature's handiwork, you're the ones I want to

An ex-corboy and prospector that knows his West and likes to write about it. That's me and my description.

JACK DOUGLAS.

San Bernardino, Calif.

HAS DIVERSE INTERESTS

Dear Corporal Smith:

Dear Corporal Smith:

I'm terribly anxious to secure crowds and crowds of pen pals. Do you think that you could find some for me in your column of pen pal requests. My brothers and sister are readers of your magazine as well as I. Well, a bit about myself. I'm nineteen, medium height, weigh 77½ lbs., and slim, have dark brown hair, which is inclined to be golden in the front,

hazel eyes, with very curly eyelashes, and fair complexion. My interests are reading, wireless, walking, traveling, cycling, pilion riding, and I simply love writing letters. Tell them, Corporal, please, that my writing is quite understandable. We live in a little seaside town, about forty miles from London. Should just love to hear from a lonesome cowboy. But should love just as much to hear from boys all over the world, America, New Zealand, Africa, all over the place. I'll answer every single letter, and exchange snaps and photos straight away. So PLEASE don't disappoint me. I'll tell you a little of my pedigree. There is a dash of Irish, from my mother's side, and my father is a descendant of the French. Quite a league of nations. Please don't disappoint me. I'll be keeping my eyes on the postman, so Cherrio. Cherrio.

I am, yours sincerely, THELMA GAPPER.

"Santiago," Avondale Do. Leigh-on-Sea. Essex, England.

BOYS WANTED

Dear Corporal Smith: Dear Corporal Smith:
Say, I could fill out a whole tablet telling you how much I like your magazine. It sure is swell.
Please put my name in the pen pals corner. I would like to hear from boys in the U.S.A., especially Boy Scouts, also from soldiers and marines. Everybody is welcome. Every boy that answers I'll give a clip of shells.

TONY SCHMIDT.

R.F.D. 7, W.S., Saginaw, Mich.

LONELY IN PANAMA

Dear Corporal Smith;

Won't you please publish this plea for pen
pals? I am a soldier in Panama and am I
lonely?

lonely?
I am 22 years old, 5 ft. 10 in. tall and weigh
170 lbs. I have black hair, brown eyes and do
not drink, use tobacco or projanity.
I would like to hear from girls between the
ages of 17 and 22. I would like to exchange
photos also. I will try to answer all letters.
Sincerely yours,
PANAMA BLUES.

c/o Corporal Smith.

NEW ZEALAND WIDOW

Dear Corporal Smith:

I like reading your magazine very much and enjoy the stories A-1. I don't happen to be lucky enough to get it often as I have to wait until I go into our nearest town and as it is twenty-one miles away I don't get there very often, still I make sure I get it when I do go. I would like if you would insert a letter in your Totem Pole for me so that I can get a few pen pals. I am a widow thirty-two years old. Auburn hair and brown eyes. I promise to answer all letters and would like people to write me especially those who are lonely.

Yours truly,

(MRS.) AGNES ILTON.

Stockton Mine, Westport, New Zealand.

SPEAKS MANY LANGUAGES

SPEAKS MANY LANGUAGES

Dear Corporal:

I love writing letters and also receiving them.
Don't you' So c'mon you would-be ink slingers,
try me! I shall answer each and every one.
Interested in everything that is honest and
good for the mind. Will exchange views and
snap-shots with all. Have been in more cities
and towns in the foreign countries than the
average man has passed light posts.

Five ft. ten, hundred seventy lbs., dark brown
curly hair, eyes brown and not a bit good looking. Am English, French, and Italian, also
speak the above, can also speak and write
Chinese and a sprinkling of a few more foreign
tongues, but please write in English.
Corporal, it would please me very much if I
could be listed among the other Pen Pals.

Thank you.

"SMOKIE THE RAMBLER."
c/o Corporal Smith.

IS LOOKING FOR HIS TWIN

Dear Corporal Smith:

Please print my plea for pen pals in the next issue of your magazine. My age is twenty-one years old. My height is five feet ten and half inches. My weight 118. I have brown hair, blue eyes. My hobbies are stamps, scrapbooks. I can tell you about the Mountains and the vest as I have been there several times. I was born on March 12, 1915, and I am looking for my twin. I would prefer corresponding with girls, either blondes or brunettes, between the age of thirteen and thirty years old. I enjoy reading your magazine very much.

Yours truly,

ROLLAND STEVENS.

508 North State Street, Norton, Kansas.

GETS SNOWED IN DURING THE WINTER Dear Corporal Smith:
Here comes a request for pen pals. Anywhere, any ages, either sex. Am I asking for too much?

I live on a farm two miles from town, and during winter am snowed in most of the time, so, pen pals, help to pass away my time. I am 21 years old. Have blue eyes, medium brown hair. Height 5 ft. 2 in. Weight 118 lbs. Love to write letters, read. Exchange snap shots, and my outdoor sports are swimming and hiking.

I think your Northwest Adventures are aveat

I think your Northwest Adventures are great.
Will exchange snap shots with all sending
one in their letters. Come on, members, fill
my mail box full.

Chenango Forks, N. Y.

Box 86.

Bow So.

DECIDEDLY FOND OF MUSIC

My Dear Corporal Smith:

Whatever the charm may be that gets letters printed, I don't know, but I hape I have stumbled upon it, me being most anxious to secure pen pals from any place on our dear old globe.

Anyone writing me, may rest assured their letter will find a prompt reply.

In case you are interested I am seventeen, in the vioinity of 5 ft. 2 in., "blue-ish" eyes, hair of dark blonde, light brunette with red tints (kinda complicated and so is my hair). No outstanding talents, but decidedly fond of music, sports, reading, hobbies and correspond-

ing with friends from here, there and everywhere.

Come on and find those pen pals for me. My pen is itching to get started and our postman

787 Adelaide MARIE (MIKKI) TADMAN. Toronto, Canada.

READERS FROM THE WESTERN COW COUNTRY

Dear Corporal Smith: I am a boy 18 years old, 5 ft. 5 in. tall, weigh 135 pounds, have blond hair and blue

eyes.
I would like to hear from boys and girls in our western cow country, but anybody is welcome to write, so, Corp., don't disappoint me, and print this real soon.

Yours turly
JOE SOBOLEWSKI.

117 Co. C. C. C. Tamworth, N. H.

SOFT SPOT FOR CANADA

SOFT SPOT FOR CANADA

Dear Corporal Smith:

The writer, a newspaperman 44, who has traveled throughout the United States and most of Canada has a soft spot for Northwestern Canada and would very much like correspondence with readers who live in the Yukon, Northwest Territories or provinces west of Ontario, Quebec and Labrador, especially the Northern parts of those provinces. Spent one winter in Northern Ontario.

Cordially,

RUSSELL J. WALDO.

North American Editors Service, Medina, N. Y.

TWO SISTERS

Dear Corporal Smith:

My sister and I read your magazine and we think it's grand.

We are both blondes and have very dark brown eyes (almost black); she is 14 and around 4 ft. 9 in., and weighs around 115 pounds. I am 4 ft. 8½ and weigh 90 pounds. My sister goes to school and I work in the Conservation Department in the State Office Building. fice Building.

If you have any room in your mag please publish this letter as we would like a lot of pen-pals.

GLADYS AND JEAN CULP. 400 S. Yale Ave., Columbus, Ohio.

BROWN-EYED BELOW.

Dear Corporal Smith:
This is my first try to crash your club, but I hope the letters will rain in on a brown-eyed blonde, 5 ft. 7 in. tall, 16 years of age, who will exchange snaps or photos.
My favorite sports are, dancing, baseball, basketball and swimming.

Hopefully yours,
LELA SIEBERT.

308 North 1 Street, Herington, Kansas.

A SLAVIC FRIEND

Dear Corporal Smith:

I am a reader of your magazine and enjoy it much. The stories in the magazine are O.K. Now I want to ask you to print my first letter.

I want pen-pals—no age limit. I am a Czechoslovak citizen and your readers may write to me English, German or Czech. I was in New York City and in Chicago once before. I am 30, blonde, blue eyes, 6 feet, 190 pound athletic build and I love over all in the world the United States.

the United States.

I hope to find among your girl readers some who would enjoy corresponding with me. I will gladly send to everyone my snapshot. Of course I would enjoy letters from men too—perhaps exchange magazines or news-

papers.

Sincerely yours, EDWARD MORAWITZ.

Smetanova 74, Brno-Kralovo Pole, Czechoslovakia.

DON'T DISAPPOINT HIM

DON'T DISAPPOINT ATTACE

Dear Corporal Smith:

I know this magazine is read all over the
world so I think and hope I will hear from
pen pals from everywhere. Do you want a 15year-old boy to look at his mail box and find
it empty everyday? Well, the result of my
search for mail from pals depends entirely
upon you. Come on and write! Every letter
will be welcomed, read and answered promity.

FLOYD LA BOMBARD.

184 Prospect St., North Adams, Mass.

ATTENTION-ARMY AND NAVY

ATTENTION—ARMY AND NAVI
Dear Corporal Smith:
I am lonesome and want to get some nice
pen pals, soldiers and sailor preferred. I would
appreciate views and souvenirs from different
places. Will exchange snap shots. I am 28
years old, have been married, and have children. Will try to answer all letters, so please
won't someone write' My mail box is empty.

Yours truly,

MARGARET CLARK.

3130 West 61st, Cleveland, Ohio.

PLAYS A GUITAR

Dear Corporal Smith: It isn't necessary for me to say I like the Northwest because anyone who reads it cannot

Northwest because anyone who read help but like it.
But how about printing this letter, my plea for pen pals?
I am five foot five, have grey eyes and dark brown hair.
I like sports of all kinds, I dance, sing and play the guitar. I like to write and I promise to answer every letter. When I say every letter I mean it.
I'm willing to exchange snap shots. And last, but not least, I'm considered pretty.
Hopefully yours.
MISS DELL SHARP.

A VERSATILE FARMERETTE

A VERSATILE FARMERETTE

Dear Corporal Smith:

Won't someone write to a lonely farmerette?

I live on a small farm. I am 16 yrs. old, and weigh 124 lbs. I am 5 ft. 2½ inches tall, have brown hair, and brown eyes. I like swimming, sking, horseback riding, dancing, toboganing, letter-writing, bicycling, and hiking. I would go out for sports in High School, but I live too far away from school.

I would like very much to write and exchange snapshots with travelers of the opposite sex in the North, Covboys, and most of all with someone in the Royal Canadian Northwest Mounted Police.

I am the adventuresome kind of a girl and have done a little traveling in and outside of New England.

So, won't someone from the big Northwest or West please write to—

"FRANKIE."

"FRANKIE."

c/o Corporal Smith.

INTERESTED IN AIR MAIL STAMPS

Dear Corporal:

I think your magazine is wonderful, and I wonder if I can find a place in the "Totem

I am a boy of 25 years and have brown hair and hazel eyes. I am interested in air mail

stamps.

If any of your readers between 18 and 26 would like to reply, I should be glad to answer.

Yours very sincerely,

ALBERT MacDONALD.

North San Juan, California.

AN ELDERLY WOMAN WANTS PEN PALS
Dear Corporal Smith:
May an elderly woman join your pen pal
club? I am not only a reader but also a great
admirer of Northwest Novels because I come
from Canada and love the North. Have been
to Seward in Alaska and want to go back. At
present I am taking care of my son's house. I
am a fairly good cook and manager. Like fish-

ing and shooting, the country, animals, flowers, and in fact all nature, and I would like to get some letters from elderly people although I lave young people. I think as one grows older if one does not read and enjoy nature, life is not worth living. In NORTHWEST ADVENTURES give us all the Mounty stories you can. They are areat

FREDE RUSSELL.

c/o Corporal Smith.

WRITE ABOUT YOUR HOBBIES

Dear Corporal Smith:

I find the stories in your magazine really enjoyable and I am voriting to ask you if you can find a place for me in your circle of pen pals.

I am twenty, brown hair and hazel eyes and a happy-go-lucky disposition, a typical Lancashire lassie.

What showt it hows and airle Salesh your.

a happy-go-uccy assposition, a typical saline shire lassie.

What about it, boys and girls? Splash your ink a bit and write to me about your particular hobbies, games, etc. I'll answer all letters.

86, Hollingreave Rd.,

Burnley, Lancs., England.

INCLINED TO BE SERIOUS

Dear Corporal Smith:

Because I'm very lonely, and because I enjoy receiving and answering letters, I'm sending out

a plea for pen pals.

I am a 16 year old girl, with light brown hair and blue eyes. I am 5 feet 4 inches tall and weigh 120 pounds.

I'm more inclined to the quiet and serious side of life, but I like swimming, hiking and reading.

reading.

I will welcome letters from everybody, both boys and-girls, especially those in foreign lands. Please, Corporal, and all you readers of the REAL NORTHWEST ADVENTURES, help me out.

FAITH.

c/o Corporal Smith.

WILL EXCHANGE SNAPS

Dear Corporal Smith:
I suppose I should describe myself, so here
goes. I'm nearly eighteen years old, stand 5 ft.
I inch, weigh 125 lbs., have brownish blonde
hair with red cast, hazel eyes and fair complexion.

My hobbies are swimming, reading, and writing letters. Pd like to get some pen pals from the West. Pm willing to exchange snap shots with anyone who cares to write.

GLADYS DAVIS.

Notch Route, Reeds Spring, Mo.

A SCOTCH LASS

Dear Corporal Smith:
Would it be possible for a person as myself to crash into your Totem Polet I am 31 years of age, have brown hair, brown grayish eyes, high complexion, 5 ft. 8 tall. Like to hear from Mounted Police in the Northwest Canada who are very lonely like myself. I am a Scotch girl. Always wanted to go to Canada. Promise to answer all letters and send snap of myself.

Yours truly,
(MISS) MARY PRENTICE.

2 Hillborough Road.
Luton Beds, England.
P.S.—Dear Corp., I think your novel is O.K. I buy it every week and when I finish it I pass it on to my friends.

FROM FOREST FIRES TO GRIZZLIES
Dear Corporal Smith:

I am a Canadian girl who very much wants
some pen pals, particularly in foreign countries. Perhaps you can help me find some. I
am nearly 20 years old, 5 ft. 3 in., with dark
brown hair and dark eyes. Would some of your
readers be interested in hearing about our adventures in the Rockies with everything from
forest fires to grizzlies? I do hope so. I am
wishing you the best of luck with your magazine.

Sincerely, (MISS) BARBARA LORD. 924 15th Avenue West, Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

IT'S LONESOME SITTING ALONE

Dear Corporal Smith:

I have just read my first copy of Real
Northwest Adventures, and I can assure you

tt will not be my last.

I wonder if anyone would care to write to a
lonely telegraph operator. I get terribly lonesome sitting alone in the office in the wee hours,
and would like some letters to liven up these
ark hours. I promise to answer all letters as
good as I can, and will exchange snaps and experiences. I can assure you I have had a few.

I am 18 years old, 5 ft. 11 ins. tall, and
weigh 173 lbs. I have blue eyes, and dark brown
hair.

So come on, Pen Pals of both sewes and of all ages and places, help make my lonely hours pass more easily.

Sincerely,
DALE (SULLY) MALYNEAUX.
421 East Second Street,

Berwick, Pa.

HORSE RIDER

Dear Corporal Smith:

Dear Corporal Smith:

I am just a lonely boy from Pennsylvania who is longing for correspondence with girls from 15 to 18 years of age. I am one who loves to see the country and therefore travel a good deal of the summer. I like all sports but I like to ride horses best of all. I am 16 years old, 5 ft. 4 in. tall and have dark blonde hair with brown eyes. If you can get this letter in your list I will appreciate it very much.

Genetary St.

Cemetary St., Elizabeth, Pa.

HE'S TRAVELED THE SEAS

HE'S TRAVELED THE SEAS

Dear Corporal Smith:

Is there any chance of a lonesome sailor joining your Totem Pole Club?

I have been in the U.S. Navy for eight years and have traveled all over the world, and would swap yarns with pen pals all over the United States. I also have snapshots of all the places I have visited, and will send some to each pal who writes to me, as long as they last.

I am 25 years old, 5 ft. 10 in. tall, weigh 168 lbs., have brown curly hair and blue eyes.

My favorite sports are hunting, fishing and motorcycle riding. I also like to dance.

I would like to hear from boys and girls anywhere, so come on, pals, and drop me a line or two, you won't be sorry.

be sorry. RALPH McDANIELS.

U. S. S. Holland, San Diego, California, Box 8.

BIG CITY BLUES

Dear Corporal Smith:

I would like so much to join your club,
I would like to have pen pals from all over,
I have traveled a lot. I am a middle-aged widow
and find this big city a rather lonesome place,
I would greatly enjoy letters from the R. C.
M. P. I would like to learn as much as possible
about that organization, having heard such
good things about it.

Hoping you can find room for my letter.

Sincerely,

Sincerely, CARRIE L. REED.

1306 N. La Salle St., Chicago, Ill.

Dear Corporal Smith:
From two lone volves in the Mountain Frontier of India. Tough as nails and thrive on hardships.
Be pleased to hear from all comers. Can tell tales of wierd experiences among the cruel Afridi, Masovali, and Pathons. Your books are a sure cure for tiger bites, etc. No kiddin'.
Have been sailors, divers, and soldiers in the French Foreign Legion. And aim to have a dash at prospecting soon.
Don't be bashful, amigos, let's have 'em. Yours sincerely.
TIGER FRITH.
HELL BENT HASKETT.

4th Light Bty., Rajmak, India, N.W.F.

LIKES TO DRAW

Dear Corporal Smith:

I am a constant reader of R. N. A. and like it.

Wish you would print this letter as I am a lonesome country fellow wanting pen pals.

My hobbies are reading, writing, and bowling, but my best hobby is drawing.

I would like to hear from girls who are interested in drawing a also from anyone else who

terested in drawing, also from anyone else who

cares to write.

Oh! I almost forgot. I am 5 feet 11 inches tall, weigh 155 lbs., have brown eyes and hair. I like all outdoor and indoor sports.

Come on, girls, and splash some ink my way. Wishing your magazine a lot of success.

Sincerely yours, GEORGE DUTRA.

54 Leonard St., Bridgewater, Mass.

INTERESTED IN YOUNG GIRLS

INTERESTED IN YOUNG GIRLS

Dear Corporal Smith:

Besides finding your magazine a worthwhile
companion to while away time, I find your Pen
Pal Department very interesting, and so here I
am sending in my plea for pen pals.

I am a young chap going on 22, having dark
brown hair, grey eyes, stand 5 ft. 11 in., and
weigh 158 bls.

I am especially interested in hearing from
young girls who dwell near and far. However,
I will answer all who write to me.

Respectfully yours,
ALBERT HAYMAN.

2509 Douglas St., Philadelphia, Pa.

STAMP COLLECTOR

Dear Corporal:
Although today is the first time I have read about your Totem Pole, I felt like kicking myself all over the Bronx, for what I have been missing. I've enjoyed all the stories in the January issue, but I've found something in the Totem Pole that could not be described in a letter. I am a young fellow of 23, married, and have the outest little fellow you would ever want to see, and the three of us are as happy as larks. I have only one hobby presently, and that is stamps. I noticed that some of your pen pals would like to trade. Well, the same goes for me, too. I would like to hear from pen pals the world wide and will answer all. Hoping the mail man rings my bell loud and long, I will wait anwlously for some one to start the ball rolling. ball rolling. JOHN F. VEVERKA.

368 East 156th Street, Bronx, New York City.

A DISTANT ENTHUSIAST

Dear Corporal Smith:

May I, as an elementary explorer into the world at large, explain that I happened to be walking along a quite described road in Vancouver when I happened to cast my optics on a book which was displayed to the gaze of the public.

book which was displayed to the gaze of the public.

Having purchased the magazine which you call the Northwest, I read it from cover to cover, adverts "an' all."

I was quite exoited and I haven't yet cooled down. So may I apply in your columns for pen pals from other nations? I am an English engineer, age 26, height 5 ft. 8 in., dark hair, grey eyes, fresh complexion, weigh 160 lbs.

I will call upon all you Yanks, male and female, to write to me about life in your part of the world. I will endeavor to retaliate and give you the news and all about everything in England which will include the coronation. I will be in London at that time. I have traveled Australia, New Zealand, Fift, France, Holland, Egypt and South America. Love all kinds of sports., having played in most. Can enjoy symphony and classics, also can even bear jaze, being a passable dancer; play chess, halma, ludo, and snake and ladder.

I sincerely hope you will not forget to write.

I sincerely hope you will not forget to write.

I remain. remain, (MR.) L. BOONE.

35 Park Lane, Liverpool 20, England.

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Postage and insurance extra

I argo II & cont over 100 years old	20c
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U. S. large copper hard time token	20c
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O. D. 1003 CIVII WAI CONCIL	
U. S. silver half dime	20c
II & nickel three-cent nices	15c
O. D. meker three-tent piece	
U. S. silver three-cent piece	30c
II & flying ongle cont	15c
O. S. Hydig eagle Cent	
U. S. thick white Indian head cent	10c
II S compan lauge half count error 100 sycans	
Large U. S. cent over 100 years old U. S. large copper cent U. S. large copper 2c coin U. S. large copper hard time token U. S. 1863 Civil War token U. S. siver half dime U. S. silver half dime U. S. silver three-cent piece U. S. silver three-cent piece U. S. flying eagle cent U. S. thick white Indian head cent U. S. copper large half cent over 100 years old	-020
old	50c
II & Columbian half dollars	75c
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U. S. half dollar over 100 years old	\$1.00
II & 6mg cilvon dellow 1700 wave	5.00
O. S. line saver donar 1790, rare	5.00
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Virginia \$1.00 treasury note, pretty	10c
Georgia \$5.00 bill, 1862, fine	10c
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Confederate bill 50c; Jackson	10c
California gold quarter queer	25c
California gold quarter, queer California gold half, queer	Ea
California gold half, queer	50c
16 different queer foreign hills	10c
to live	
10 different foreign coins	15c
5 different foreign nickel coins	10c
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Roman bronze B.C. coin, Roman soidiers	25c
Foreign old nice silver dollar	95c
F	10c
Foreign coin over 100 years old	
Foreign coin, fine, dated before 1800	15c
Familian salar Cara datad before 1700	25c
roreign coin, line, dated before 1700	
Foreign coin, dated before 1600	50c
California gold half, queer. 10 different queer foreign bills. 10 different foreign coins. 5 different foreign nickel coins. Roman bronze B.C. coin, Roman soldiers Foreign old nice silver dollar. Foreign coin over 100 years old. Foreign coin, fine, dated before 1800 Foreign coin, fine, dated before 1700 \$2.00 catalogue value of different fine foreign stamps	
\$2.00 Catalogue value of unierent line	155
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100 different fine ferries stavens	10c
foreign stamps	
5 different fine foreign covers	15c
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U. S. first flight cover, fine	15c
II S first day cover	15c
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5 different fine foreign covers	10c
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1000 mixed foreign stamps	35c
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girl in it. Miniature queer Aztec pottery. Tesuque (used) genuine Indian pipebowl Catawba (used) genuine Indian pipebowl	15c
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Miniature queer Aztec pottery	10c
Tecuana (used) genuine Indian ninehowl	75c
resudue (useu) genume andian pipenowi.,,,,	130
Catawba (used) genuine Indian pipebowl	25c
Pair Sioux beaded buckskin moccasins	1.50
Donates Issue services Massisses Landon Is	2.00
Pretty long genuine Mexican handmade	1 2 2 2 2 2
	1.00
Indian, pretty, solid beaded watch fob Solid, beaded, pretty, leather belt, fine	30c
mulan, pretty, sond beaded watch 10b	SUC
Solid, beaded, pretty, leather belt, fine	
buckle	3.00
Clair 11	
Solid beaded, pretty hat band, wide	1.50
Woven, pretty designed horse hair helt	2.85
better pretty designed noise nam better.	4.00
buckle Solid beaded, pretty hat band, wide Woven, pretty designed horse hair belt Miniature, pretty, pistol shoots a real shell,	
beauty	1.00
New hunting knife, genuine deer foot handle	
ivew nunting kine, genuine deer foot handle	1.25
New hunting knife, pretty goldstone han-	
dle in cheath	1.25
dle, in sheath	2,23
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with hair on	1.50
with hair on	1.50

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THE TRADING POST

Here is where the readers of REAL NORTH-WEST ADVENTURES can exchange something they have, but do not want, for something that someone else may have and that you may want. This is a free service, but your announcement must not exceed 28 words. It must be understood that REAL NORTHWEST ADVENTURES is not responsible for losses sustained. Print your announcement clearly. Nothing but bona fide "swaps?" will be inserted. No sales. Enclose clipping of this announcement with your "swap."

Want Short HiSpeed Woodsman, 16 pump or double, Remington 22 Fieldmaster rifle, Weaver rifle scope. A. Welker, 406 No. Harvey, Oak Park, Ill.

Have guns, revolvers, old clock, old coins, etc. Want Indian relics, violins, etc. Send your list and get mine. E. B. Campbell, R. No. 1, Box 88, Tullahoma, Tenn.

Have 5 volumes Library of Freemasonry, illustrated, leather bound. Also 50 fiction books and 200 magazines: Detective, Western Adventures, etc. Want low speed, 6-volt generator or offers. Max Belz, Waldoboro, Me.

Will swap Stamps, stamp for stamp, quality for quality. Send 100 with return 3c. postage, and I will send like amount. L. C. Fuller, Pinehurst, North Carolina.

Swap: Saxophone and case, cap shotgun, sword cane, camp stove, 1659 book, mounted deer heads. Want: Firearms, portable typewriters, old stamps on envelopes, or what? Stjohn, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

Have forty late western magazines, five pairs of riding breeches, two khaki tropical uniforms, light small car in excellent running condition. Would like small trailer. Jean G. Malleux, Box 88, Watertown, Mass.

What do you want for correspondence courses, scouting, sports and athletic goods, stamp albums, stamps, magazines, books, novelties, etc. R. Yates, Laurel Hill, Coleraine, County Derry, Ireland.

Diamond rings, 75 pounds solder, 500 articles for scrap gold, pistols, saxophone, bird stones, broken watches, yellow cases, coins, sterling silver eggs, honey. Foeller, 3117 Brigham, Toledo, Ohio.

Have electric engineering course, Eastman kodak 2¾ by 3¾, German bayonets, printing press, revolver, electric razor, rubber boat inflated, motor, Remington & Oliver typewriters. Want radio or. J. Steel, Box 107, Cincinnati, Ohio.

100 magazines, 1 Argosy printed July, 1905, 31 years old. Want Carl Zeiss & Hensoldt 8 power grey army field glasses and new condition Winchester or Remington 5-shot, 22-bolt action clip magazine or repeater action. S. M. Smith, Luretha, Ky.

Will exchange picture cards, $3\frac{1}{2}$ "x2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", views of Australian towns and scenery for cards of other countries. Cards must be only $3\frac{1}{2}$ " in size. A. M. Prior, New Moonta, Old Australia.

Have a 45-70 rifle, good shape. Will trade for stamps or stamp collection. R. E. Brittain, R. D. No. 1, Mogadore, Ohio.

Have approximately 200 formulas. Worth \$50. Trade lot for typewriter, or correspondence courses, or Encyclopedia Britannica, or archery equipment, or taxidermy course. C. Edmonds, Kalmata, Taranaki, N. Z.

(Continued on page 120)

Wanted: Radio or train equipment, electric. I have coins, stamps, magazines, books, flashlights, pens, small size boxing gloves, camera, and gun. Peter Messer, 2011 D St., Bellingham, Washington.

Have engravings dated 1789, N. W. taxidermy course, U. S. school banjo course, oil paintings, plants, vases, electric clock, others. Want old guns, swords, Indian pottery, coins, bronze and marble statuary, plants. Stanley Pytel, 5025 Ogden Ave., Cicero, III.

Trade these three valuable money-making formulas, shaving cream, tooth paste, chewing gum, for 100-shot air pistol, or 1,000 different stamps, or course on ju-jitsu. G. Edmonds, Kaimata, Taranaki N. Z.

Have 260 Indian Head pennies dated from 1909-1864. Best offer gets the Indian pennies. Joseph Koveleskie, 848 Carmalt St., Dickson City. Pa.

Make offers for opal tie pin, Eastman camera, aviation course, baseball shoes, .22 revolver, .32 H. & R. revolver, Eastman U. P. kođak, new hockey skates, 4 cylinder dry ice motor, electric fan. Don Hamilton, East Liberty, Ohio.

Send us better grade foreign stamps, mint sets preferred, and receive equal value in precancels—Okla. Tex., etc. Peck & Co., 217 W. Ritz, Tulsa, Okla.

Have Winchester hammerless :22 pump, Remington .22 auto and .35 pump rifle, Lake lots. A. Welker, 406 No. Harvey, Oak Park, III.

Stamps! Old Envelopes! Send 100 air mails, commemoratives, old U.S. or Jubilees or mixture of them and get over 200 of my excellent condition world mixture. Prompt reply. Chas. Samwick, 350 E. 5th St., Brooklyn, New York.

Have old volumes magazines, Harpers Weekly, Bazaar, Cosmopolitan, Harpers Magazine. Also books old and recent. Want northwest magazines and books. Send list for list. Russell Waldo, Medina, N. Y.

Have Leedy Plectrum Banjo with case, value \$300, in perfect condition; for what? Make offer. Joey Maes, 105 E. 19th St., New York City, N. Y.

Have antique weapons, military insignia collection, war medals, etc. Want standard portable type-writer as Royal or Corona. V. J. McMurtry, 4133 Kenmore Ave., Chicago, Ill.

Have traps, crystal-set, microscope in case, racing all kinds. Will trade for Zane Grey books, Double Action Western, Real Western and Complete Northwest Novel magazines. Richard Tomberlin, Mildred, Minn.

Have traps, crystal set, microscope in case, racing skates, cook kit, bow and arrows, outdoor magazines and books, outdoor equipment; want guns, outdoor equipment or what have you? J. C. Schramm, 104 Church St., Saratoga Spa, N. Y.

20 acres, 4-room house, 6 outbuildings. Want 8-room house, 8 acres in Florida with electric lights. Stamp Please. C. B. Stickles, Kirbyville, Texas.

Have typewriter, battery radio, taxidermy course, mailing lists, old coins, books, magazines, small harp. Want printing press, 22 rifle, typewriters, Indian relics. Edna Jenks, Chenango Forks, N. Y.

What's offered for 1,000 mixed stamps. Can use anything. If answer is wanted, enclose stamp. Charles Boyle, 894 Washington St., Lynn, Mass.

Send us your better U. S. and foreign stamps and receive equal value in fine precancels. Send 100 precancels for 5 Tulsa view cards. Peck, 217 N. Ritz, Tulsa, Okla.

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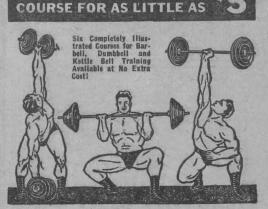
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